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WASHINGTON AND HIS MEN.

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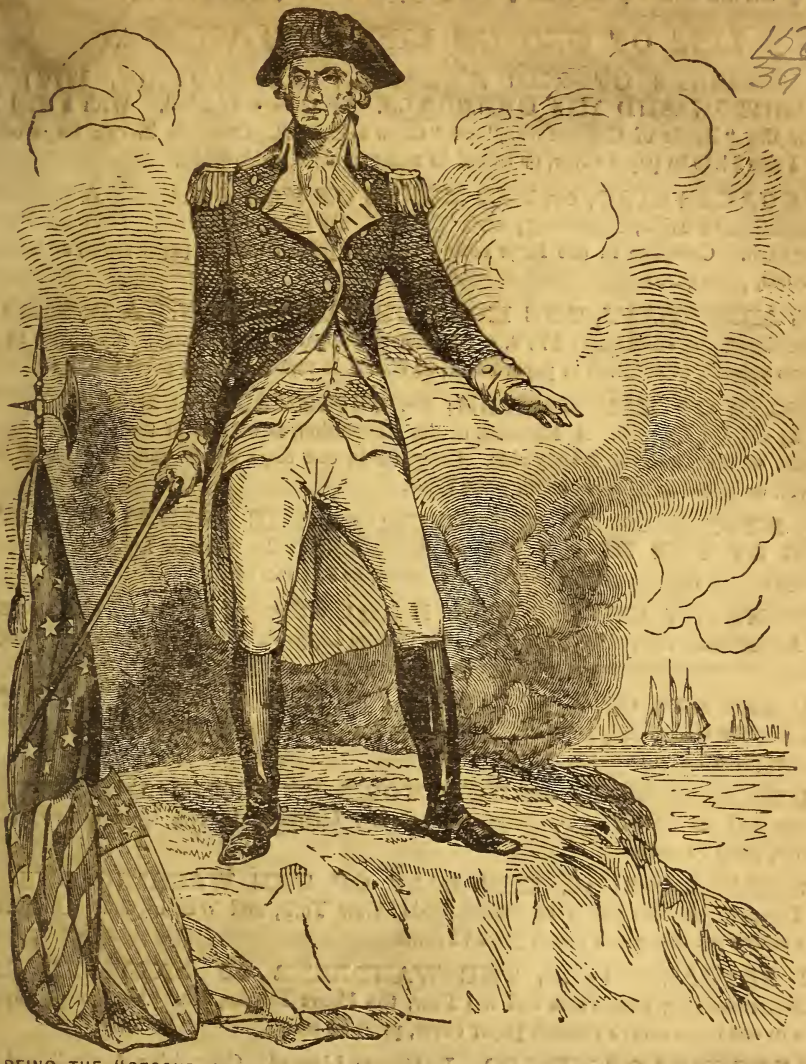

BEING THE "SECOND SERIES" OF THE "LEGENDS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION."

BY GEORGE LIPPARD.

AUTHOR OF "THE QUAKER CITY; OR, THE MONKS OF MONK HALL;" "THE LEGENDS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION;" "PAUL ARDENHEIM, THE MONK OF WISSAHIKON;" "BLANCHE OF BRANDYWINE;" "THE MYSTERIES OF FLORENCE;" "THE MEMOIRS OF A PREACHER;" "THE EMPIRE CITY;" "THE ENTRANCED;" ETC., ETC.

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Prologue.

LEGEND FIRST.

THE LAST OF THE WASHINGTONS.

"I was born of a noble ancestry," said a great man who had risen from the kennel where Poverty hides its hopeless face — "True, my parents were poor, but three hundred years ago, the blood which flows in my veins, coursed in the veins of Lords, Archbishops, Counts, Dukes and Kings."

Then another Great Man, who had listened to this glorious boast made reply:

"I also come of a noble lineage," he said, "My parents it is true were rich, but three hundred years ago, the blood which flows in my veins, coursed in the veins — not of Count, Archbishop and King — but of the Hewer and Digger, of the Serf and the Worker, whose labors clothed the Lord, and gave bread to the King."

And the first great man laughed at the boast of the second. There was great reason for this laughter. Who would not sooner be descended from a King although a robber and assassin, than from a ragged Worker, who can boast no wealth save the heritage of want and hunger? For a King, although his hands are red with the blood of the innocent, and his fine apparel purchased with the misery of countless hearts, is yet a King; the head and fountain of all nobility. And a Serf, although his hands are unstained with blood, and his hard crust unpolluted by a single victim's tears, is still a Serf; the foundation stone of the world, on which Society is built; a very useful thing, but hidden in the darkness, by the great edifice of Wealth and Power.

Let us illustrate this question by a Legend of a far distant age. Let us trace the Ancestry of a single Great Man — whom we select from the crowd of illustrious names — back to its very fountain, in this dim Heraldry of the Past.

It has often come to me, clothed with strange and peculiar details, this Legend of a long past age.

— The atmosphere of a luxurious chamber was burdened with sighs and prayers.

It was a gorgeous apartment in the castle of a noble race; no display of sumptuous grandeur was lacking there, the walls were concealed by hangings of purple and gold, the dome-like ceiling was supported by marble columns. It was full of light and glitter, rich with fine linen and gold, and yet Death was there.

He came not to strike the beautiful and the young; no full bosom of a trembling woman was there, to grow chill and dead at his kiss. His hand was extended to palsy an aged head, whose wrinkled forehead — wet with moisture — displayed the white hairs, venerable with the snows of eighty years.

An old man was dying there.

Not sinking feebly into the wave of Death, his senses wrapped in the fancies of delirium, nor yet with his chilled lips moving with one impatient moan.

But sitting erect on his death-couch, the silken coverlet thrown aside from his wasted chest, his hands clasped, and his face, with the hair and beard, like drifted snow, turned to the light. Beneath his thick eyebrows, also snow-white, his grey eyes shone with an unfaltering glance.

His gaze was centred on the light, and as the death-dew began to glisten on his forehead, and the blueish tint of the grave began to gather over the nails of his long white fingers, the old man, supported by silken pillows, never for one moment turned his eyes away.

At the foot of the couch stood an altar on which the waxen candles burned with steady lustre. Their clear light shone upon the Image of the Saviour, sculptured in ivory, with his limbs nailed to the Cross, and a calm Divinity of Despair writhing over his Divine face.

And at the foot of the bed beside the altar, was the armor and sword of the dying man. He was the last of his race. The sword was very bright; the armor shone like a mirror. He had worn it in the days of

his young manhood — it had encased many a noble form of his race before he was born — that sword had flashed in the holy war of the crusade, and covered itself with the blood of Civil War.

In his last moments, the old man, dying without an heir, sternly conscious that the fatal hour of his house was at hand — that the bright and bloody career of his race was about to end forever in his death — this brave old man, venerable with the trials of eighty years, gazed steadily upon the armor and the sword. Sometimes his glance wandered for a moment to the Divine Face, but as suddenly returned to the warrior array, which was piled up at the foot of the bed.

The Priest, a hard, stern man with shaven crown and sombre apparel, colorless hands folded on his breast, and a dead vacant eye, glaring from compressed brows, stood near the bed, with the vessels of the Last Sacrament, arranged on the table by his side. But the old man did not heed him, nor turn his eyes for a moment to a pale faced woman who stood near the priest, and fixed her eyes upon her father's dying face, and wept without ceasing.

It was his widowed daughter — his only child. Nay, there was another child, a younger daughter, but no one might speak her name, in this death-room, or the old man would couple that name with his dying curse.

And beyond the altar, stand the servitors of his house, watching with dumb agony the last struggle of the dying Lord. Here are the soldiers who fought with him, in the days of old, and here the retainers who dwell on his broad lands, as their fathers have dwelt for ages past.

The old man's lips moved —

"He prays!" cried the widowed daughter, in an accent of joy, as her wasted face was bathed in tears. "He may relent —"

"Never —" cried the Priest, with a scowl — "The old man is conscious that the honour of his house dies with him. His son fell in battle — you, Lady, are widowed — childless. As for Alice —"

"My sister —"

More gloomily scowled the Priest —

"Do not breathe her name. Let the old man, even your father, Lord Ralph of Wyttonhurst, die in peace. Or wouldst thou have him go to the presence of his God with a curse upon his soul?"

While the Priest and the woman by his side conversed in whispers, a dead awe had fallen upon all the other faces, which were clustered near the light, gazing upon the shrunken form and white-bearded face of the dying Lord.

For the first time in an hour he spoke —

"Sword that my fathers bore to battle, you will rest upon my bosom when I am dust. There will be no hand to wield you when I am dead. Bury me —" he said, without once turning his eyes — "with my armour on, and my sword by my side. Let the banner of Wyttonhurst be taken from the hall, and wrap it about my coffin, so that all the world may know that the House of my Fathers is dead."

"Father —" said a low pleading voice, and the old man felt a warm hand upon his chilled fingers.

"It is Mary —" he muttered, without turning his gaze — "A true daughter of our race. She will soon follow her father to the charnel. In all the world there will not be left a human thing with a drop of our blood in their veins."

And as a single tear rolled down his wasted cheek, he surrendered his thin hand — already damp with death — to the clasp of his faithful child. Her soft golden hair was already touched with grey; her cheeks had been robbed of their warm hues by the hard and bitter experience of life, and yet as she bent her face near to the stern visage of her father, not a heart in the dreary chamber but was touched by the sight.

"Faithful," murmured the old Lord — "True to the last."

Even the leaden visage of the Priest relented, and something like humanity lighted his dead eye-balls.

"But Father —" and shuddering as she spoke, the widowed daughter enfolded him in her arms, and pressed her lips to his clammy face — "By the memory of that Saviour who smiles upon you now, I beseech you forgive your wandering child — forgive — your lost Alice! Do not, O, as the dread Hereafter already rushes upon your fading sight, do not curse your own flesh and blood."

Without a word, the old man raised his death-stricken arm, and gathering his failing strength for the effort, thrust her arms from his neck, her face from his cheek. His brow glowed with a stern, unforgiving look; the lines of his face grew suddenly rigid, as with the outward indications of an unrelenting Will.

"Forgive her?" the cold tone of the Priest fell like ice upon the daughter's heart — "Did she not, child as she was of the old man's heart, betrothed to a Lord of noble lineage, forsake her father, her betrothed husband — leave these very walls — to share the fate of a ——

"Low born peasant knave, who could not call one rood of ground his own."

"I know it —" the daughter exclaimed, as she confronted the Priest. "Yet still she is of our own blood. She is my sister. She is Alice of Wyttonhurst."

A murmur pervaded the apartment, and the eyes of the spectators was fixed upon the brave Woman, who true to the holiest instincts of her nature, dared even the anger of her dying father, in the attempt to wring from his chilled lips only one word of blessing, one accent of forgiveness.

But no accent of forgiveness came — stern, cold and unrelenting he gazed upon the armour, the sword and the image of the Dying Redeemer, murmuring with his husky voice, a curse upon Alice, his Lost Daughter.

And when the Priest was encircled by white-robed children with silver censers swinging in their little hands — when the words of the Last Sacrament trembled from his lips, rolling in full deep melody through the dreary chamber — while the daughter knelt by the bed, and the servitors were bowing their heads against the floor — still, with a stern resolve upon his forehead, the old Lord, sat erect on his couch, coupling with a curse the name of the younger daughter, Alice.

Shall we leave this scene, where Death is clad in grandeur and vengeance? In order to comprehend it more fully, shall we behold death, rudely clad in misery and chains?

In a cell, sunken far below the surface of the earth — with a huge mass of walls and chambers between its arched ceiling and the light of the stars — an Executioner, torch in hand, came to look upon his victim.

He stood in the centre of the damp cell, his pale face, with cold eyeballs and thin severe lips, standing out from his black cowl. For the Executioner did not appear in the form of a Headsman with a sharp axe in his brawny hand, but as a Monk with the cold sneer on his withered lips, a calm scorn in his impassible eyes.

Above him frowned the arch of the cell — around him, brooded the shadows, through whose darkness the moisture on the thick walls, shone with a pale dreary lustre.

At his feet, crouching on a rude seat — a solid block of stone — was his Prisoner or victim, chained by the wrists and ancles to the floor.

The light of the torch disclosed him, as bowing his head between his hands — they rested on his knees — he seemed to be lost to all consciousness in a miserable repose.

"One year of night and silence, will wither the bravest form! A year ago, across the threshold he stepped, with a bold and agile stride, and as the door grated behind him, a smile flashed over his features. Look upon him, *now* —"

Nearer to the couching form, the spectator held his light. But the Prisoner did not move.

It was pitiable to see him, as he sat upon the hard stone, irons upon his wrist, and chains extending from his ancles to the massy ring in the centre of the floor.

It was but the wreck of a man. A muscular form, broad in the chest, majestic in the stride, wrecked suddenly into a living skeleton, whose fleshless arms and gaunt outlines, the rays which fluttered about him could not altogether hide. Such was the Prisoner of that cell, whose Night was Eternal.

Once his hands wandered amid tangled masses of dark hair, streaked with grey. It was a large head, but the pale face could not be seen, for the chained hands veiled it from the light.

"For one year he has not beheld the light of day. A morsel of coarse bread, a cup of water, thrust through the door of his cell — such has been his food for a year. He cannot last much longer —"

The Prisoner moved; his chains aroused the echoes of the cell. A miserably wasted face, with eyes hollow and wild, glowed in the light. There was a broad forehead, marked eyebrows, but the eyes were sunken in their sockets, the cheeks hollow, the lips — parting in an idiotic smile — chill and colorless.

He turned his face from the light, as though its glare smote his eyeballs with deadly anguish — and then shading his sight with his chained hands looked vacantly into the impassible face of his Gaoler.

Do you feel that picture, in all its details? Far above this solitary wretch, arise the walls, the corridors, the huge roof and slender spires of this immense edifice; and far above, the light of the midnight stars shines upon the Cross, until it glitters like a brighter star above the venerable pile.

Far above, there are free fields, and wide forests, the fields white with snow and the forests desolate with winter — yet still they are free.

And here, in the cell, which resembles a coffin, with its low ceiling and narrow walls, a living man withers inch by inch to death and feels that his voice is drowned

by the impenetrable stone that shut him in. Feels tha this cell is not merely the Prison of his Body but the Coffin of his Soul. He is shut off, forever, from society and the sympathies of mankind. When he dies no tear will moisten his cold face. Not one pitying eye will look into the recesses of his accursed grave.

Ah, the reality of death like this, would chill the heart of the bravest man that ever dared death on the battle-field.

— The wasted man looked up, and murmured two syllables, that may seem to us, but feeble and incoherent —

"Wife — child —" he said, and bowed himself to his chains again.

Then the cold sneer of his Executioner, was lengthened out in measured words:

"A serf — a hewer of wood and drawer of water — you dared to love the lady of a noble house. A man of no name, born to hew and dig, as your fathers before you were born, you dared to open the Book of God, and read its pages for yourself. But the strong arm of the Church, came suddenly down upon your head. The wife whom you had dared to take to yourself was doomed to the silence and secrecy of a convent — and you — miserable man! Do you remember your sentence — as it fell from the lips of your Judges, only a year ago ——"

The Prisoner moved not, but a groan was heard.

"*Eternal seclusion from the face of man.*" This was the word pronounced upon your head by the Church and the Law. 'Only once a year, you shall be permitted to see the face of a human being. The hand of mercy will be extended to you, in case you renounce at once your wife, and the heresy which you have wrung from the pages of the Book of God.' I am here to offer that mercy — say that the lady Alice is no longer wife of yours — say that you believe no longer your damnable heresy but in our Church — and you shall live!"

It seemed as if the sneering tone and contemptuously offered mercy of the Monk, had roused the wasted man into a new life.

"You come too late," he sadly said, raising his hollow eyes — "That which you call my heresy, has been my only stay, my unfaltering hope, through the endless Night of this living grave. Shall I renounce it now, and lie basely, as I am about to go into the presence of my God? Alice — renounce her? Wherefore? We will soon be joined again, where there are neither locks nor bolts; not much of Church or King; nothing but children whose Father is the living God."

Not very boldly did he speak these words. Faltering in every accent, his eyes vacant and dreary all the while, his hands trembling in their chains, he spoke with great difficulty, pausing for breath between every word.

"You come too late," and he bowed his head without a groan.

For a long while he was silent, while the Monk holding the torch above his wasted form, looked upon him with the same impassible scorn. At last, startled by the breathless stillness of his prisoner, he went to him, and shook him by the shoulder, but the Prisoner moved not, nor uttered one moan. The Monk rudely raised his head from his fettered hands, and saw at once that he was Dead.

He too was the last of his race, the last Peasant of his name. Or had he yet a child? No wife — no child?

Yet even as the light flashed vividly upon his wasted form, and tinted with a red glare his motionless eyeballs, there was something upon his face, which spoke of Peace. A smile hung around his chilled lips; there was no sorrow in the solitary tear which bathed his cheek.

The sneer passed from the spectator's face. He could not but look with something like pity upon the dead man. As he suffered the head to fall once more upon the hands, a bright object escaped from the rags which bound the shrunken chest, and fluttered to the floor.

The Monk raising it, beheld a dingy piece of parchment, on which, in the rude yet nervous old English character, certain strange words were written:

"THE SPIRIT OF JEHOVAH IS UPON ME TO PREACH GOOD TIDINGS TO THE POOR."

These words (whose orthoepy we have modernized) were all that the strip of parchment contained, but the Monk pondered upon them for a long time, wondering from what strange book they could have been taken.

And ere many hours were passed, a slab was lifted from the prison floor, and the unshrouded corse of the prisoner, hurled into the cavity which yawned beneath.

He was forgotten — lost in the great abyss of the past. And yet perchance, his blood did not altogether die, his spirit altogether fade, as they placed the stone upon his breast, and left him to his long repose.

Turn we once more, to the gorgeous chamber of the ancient baronial hall The last sacrament has been

said — the breath of incense yet lingers in the air. Around the room still gather the servitors of the noble house; the Priest kneels by the bed; the widowed daughter above is absent from the scene.

The old man in the same position in which we last beheld him, crosses his hands upon his breast, and gazes upon the woman, the sword, and Holy Image. There is a glassier light in his eye, the moisture starts more brightly from his forehead; his hands are blue with the death-chill.

The same ray which warms his face, glistens upon the woman, and the rich purple hangings of the death-chamber.

— Gaze upon this scene, compare it with the miserable death, which but a moment since took place, far down in the dreary atmosphere of the coffin-like cell.

It is indeed a widely different scene. Here death is invested with the splendors of rank, and grows less terrible under the weight of purple and gold — there, a ghostly thing of rags and famine appears in lurid torch-light; and a face withered, not by age nor disease, but by the pang of persecution, rests between hands which are heavy with a felon's chains.

It was near the daybreak hour, when the dawn began to steal through the curtained windows, that a woman's form stole through the silent watchers and advanced to the bedside.

"Father," she whispered, and placed his chilled fingers upon a little hand — not her own — which did not shrink from the old man's dying grasp.

He turned and gazed upon his widowed daughter.

"I am dying," he faltered; "Alice —" he murmured the name of his lost daughter, but seemed to hesitate as the curse hung on his lips.

"She died to-night," said the faithful Daughter — "Died in the Convent, amid the Nuns, who could not but weep as they saw her glide so pale and broken-hearted into the arms of death. She died but —"

Once more she placed this little hand within his own.

"Behold her child!"

It was a brown-haired boy, not more than four years old, who looked with a vague wonderment into the old man's face. He was coarsely attired, like the child of a peasant, but his eyes were round and bright, his warm cheek full of health.

The stern Baron looked upon that wondering child, as though he would have killed him with the last glance of his glassy eyes. But the boy clung to his withered breast, crept tremblingly up the side of the high couch, and wound his little arms around the gaunt limbs of the dying man.

"Have you a Mother, child — a Father —" gasped the Baron, as his senses began to wander in the mists of death.

The Boy looked upon him with a vacant stare. "Father"—"Mother" — these words sounded as an unknown language in his ears. They had torn him, when a babe, from his mother's breast. He had never seen his Father's face. Therefore with his large black eyes dilating with a stare of child-like wonder, he gazed vacantly into the death-stricken face of the great Baron.

"Had I but a child like thee —" the old man gasped — "To wear my sword, and bear my banner forth to battle! Curses, curses upon the child who fled from my roof with a low-born peasant! Had she but wedded one of her own rank, her child might have taken the name of our House. A peasant's wife! Thy name, my pretty one — it is pleasant to feel thy kindly eyes upon me — thy name!"

The Boy in his clear silvery voice uttered a name —

"The peasant's child!" cried the old man with an oath that came with his last breath — "The child of Alice and her peasant husband!" with the last impulse of his strength — while death came coldly over every sense — he dashed the boy aside, and fell back stiff and dead.

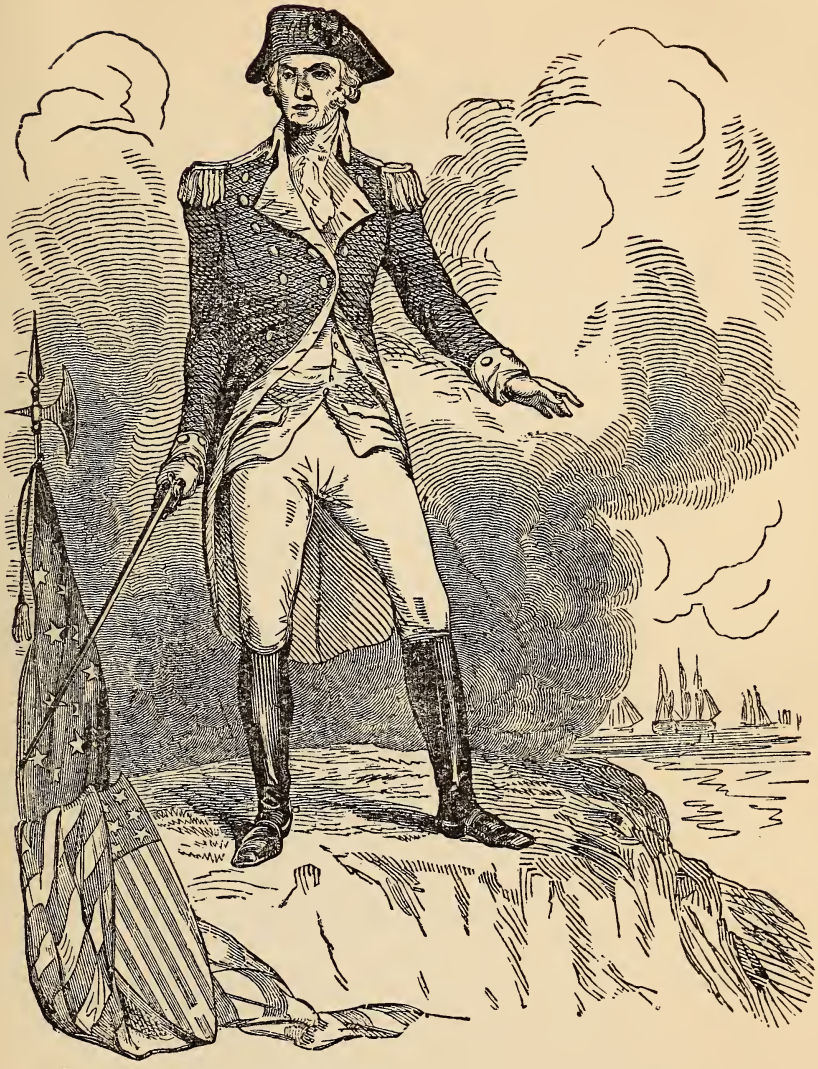
A wonderful thing it was to see that little child crouching on the silken coverlet, his rosy cheeks and great dark eyes, contrasting so strongly with the dead eyeballs and fallen jaw of the great Lord.

A peasant's child, pressing the downy pillow of a dead Lord! Even in death the old man's face seemed to sneer at the thought, and the frightened boy crept slowly from his side.

And yet in distant ages — from this drear night of the fifteenth century, when we stand beside the death-bed of a Lord — the name of that Peasant Boy, may be a nobler name, than all the Wyttonhursts of the English Island. Aye nobler than Lancaster or Plantagenet, nobler than all the names inscribed on the blood-red scroll of British Heraldry —

For the child, trembling on the death-couch of the Baron, the Son of the Peasant, who died alone in his dungeon coffin, was named LAWRENCE WASHINGTON.

Could that dying Baron have looked into the future, through the mists of three centuries, he might have seen a descendant of that peasant child, in the person of — GEORGE WASHINGTON



LEGEND SECOND.

THE MOTHER'S PRAYER.

A mother on her knees, stretching forth her hands over her slumbering child, while through the gloom of twilight her soul, shining from her uplifted eyes, ascends in voiceless communion with God —

Was it in a Palace, where a Royal Babe, wrapped in purple, clutches a sceptre for a plaything, and only uncloses its eyes to behold scenes of luxury — trains of liveried and titled lacquies — magnificent halls, looking out from their lofty windows upon gardens peopled with armed vassals?

Was it a royal mother, like that doll of legitimacy, Maria Louisa, whose veins were stagnant with the royal blood of ten centuries, whose silken vestment never once moved to one throb of womanly feeling, warm from a Mother's heart?

Was it an imperial babe that met her gaze; a tiny thing, fated to be King of Rome to-day, and to-morrow but the child of an Imperial Outcast, chained by British hands to an isolated rock in the centre of an ocean?

No. The Mother was neither Queen nor Empress; she knelt at the evening hour, in a chamber of her home, where the last ray of sunset, trembling through an opened window, bathed with the same flush her face and the face of the sleeping babe.

And the breeze that came over fields, just blooming into verdure, was imbued with the delicious perfume of early summer. And the sun which, setting, flung its beams upon the faces of Mother and Child, was sinking in a blue vault, undimmed by a single cloud. And the Home was a plain wooden building, one story in height, standing amid trees and gardens near the water-side.

One hundred and sixteen years have passed since that hour, and yet the scene is fresh before us still. Let us invoke the memory of the Past, and paint that scene upon the heart of every American Mother.

In a room, whose old fashioned furniture — pictures on the wainscot walls, a couch in one corner, floor white as snow, and table on which was placed a Bible — was shadowed by the gloom of twilight, the Mother knelt, her face toward the setting sun.

Through an open casement — fringed with a young vine, amid whose tender leaves, delicate flowers, white and beautiful as snow-drops in the moonlight—came the breeze and sunshine, filling the dim room with gleams of light and odours of leaves and flowers.

The Mother was kneeling in the recess of that window — a pale woman, whose matronly forehead was radiant with the divine tenderness of a Mother's love, whose eyes uplifted — shining in their tears — were instinct with a Mother's Soul. Her cheeks glowed with a flush of crimson, as she stretched her thin white hands above the child.

And the child, resting on a pillow, its tiny hands clasped and its eyes sealed in slumber — it was altogether a fragile thing, a frail embodiment of an immortal soul. As the sunshine stole in glimpses over its face, and turned the marble whiteness of its little hands to coral, a solitary flower fell from the vine above, and trembled down upon it, and rested like a Blessing upon its breast.

Altogether, this humble apartment, furnished in the plain style of the olden time — the open casement fringed with vines — the Mother kneeling, and the Babe slumbering with the white flower on its bosom — presented a scene not at all worthy of the sage Historian who can only picture intrigue and bloodshed, but rather the simple chronicler, whose pencil and whose heart lingers ever amid the holy quietude of — Home.

And as the breeze lifted the brown hair of the Mother, she stretched forth her hands, and her Soul went up to God in a voiceless Prayer.

Oh, there was a world of eloquence in that pale face, glowing in sunset, and impassioned with a Mother's Love!

Shall we translate that Prayer into the lame words of sound? "Father in Heaven! Behold this Babe that slumbers now, with an Immortal Soul beating silently in its bosom. Shall this child, now dawning into life, ripen into virtuous manhood, and sleep after the toil of this world in a blessed grave? Or, shall he live to curse his race, and after a life of infamy moulder to dust, with no tear to sanctify his ashes?"

It was this Thought that gave such divine eloquence to the Mother's face — *The Future of her Child.*

And as her voiceless prayer went up to God, it seemed to her that the sunset sky, and the river flowing among fields of corn, passed suddenly away. All became dark night around her. And through the dead stillness of night, came a voice which spoke not so much to her ear as to her soul — "*Mother! Behold the Future life of this child, which now slumbers beneath your gaze.*"

O! beautiful and wondrous was the Vision, or the Dream, or the Reality, which then came gliding upon the Mother's eyes.

It was a prospect of green hills, undulating beside tumultuous waters, and centred in the bosom of a silent wilderness. And on a rock beside the waters, which, plunging over a crag, howled in the abyss far beneath, stood a youth of eighteen years, clad in back-woodsman's garb, staff in hand and pilgrim's wallet on his back. His face turned to the setting sun, glowed at once with the beauty of youth and the silent majesty of precocious Thought.

The Mother's eyes lingered long upon this lonely boy, standing over the abyss, in the drear wilderness.

She clasped her hands — she asked the meaning of this scene. "It is in the wilderness that the heart of the boy will ripen into virtuous manhood. For as he walks the wilderness — alone with God and his own Soul — *God's voice will speak to him, with the memory of a Mother's Prayers.*"

The scene was gone — gone the hills, the abyss, the boy of eighteen, standing on the isolated rock.

The scene which the Mother beheld made the blood run cold in her veins. It was a Battle among wild hills — clouds of lurid smoke, rolling over heaps of dead, whose glassy eyes shone mockingly in the red light. Red men were there, murdering in stealth, from the shelter of a log or tree — and there legions of armed men, in scarlet array, marched in exact order to their certain Death.

But there was one form, a youth of twenty-three, mounted on a dark bay horse, who won at once the Mother's eye.

Where the fight was most terrible, where the yell of dying men mingled most fiercely with the red man's war-whoop — he was there. Ever the same, a gallant youth of magnificent form, and grey eyes, dilating with a hero's soul.

And the dying raised their pale faces to behold him as he went by, and their lips grew cold forever in the act of blessing his name.

How the Mother's heart expanded in her bosom, as she beheld this scene!

But ah, sad and fearful change! His horse is wounded — he totters, he reels, and buries his rider under his writhing body. There is a terrible pause. At last, covered with blood, the fallen Rider springs to his feet and beholds the foe who wounded his horse, and aimed the bullet at his own heart — he beholds the foe on his knees, beaten down by a friendly sword.

Does he slay the fallen foe? The Mother holds her breath as she watches the issue of the scene. Ah, he raises his hand, the youth of twenty-three, but it is to bear his enemy aside from the roar of the conflict, and rest his shattered limbs by the river side, under the shade of a great oak tree.

And then, once more through the silence comes a voice — "Behold your son in Battle! Strong in the Right, he prepares himself on the dreary hill-side for a wider field, a nobler cause. He cannot strike the fallen, nor pursue the suppliant foe, *for the Memory of his Mother's Prayer is with him now.*"

And thus, from scene to scene, the Mother beheld spreading before her, the great drama of her Child's Future. The scenes that she saw, the battles she beheld, would crowd a volume.

There was a dark river, burdened with ice, and heaving sullenly in the grey winter's dawn.

Her Son, the Babe which sleeps before her, grown to mature manhood, was upon that river, guiding the wreck of an army to the opposite shore, and speaking to half-naked and starving men the bold thoughts of Freedom.

There was a scene of cheerless hills, crowded by miserable huts, whose rugged timbers rose gloomily from amid a wide waste of snow. Starvation was there, and Plague and Cold, doing their three-fold work upon a band of heroes. But there, upon his knees, in his warrior uniform, praying to God for his men — offering up his life as a sacrifice for his country — there was the leader of this band, whose great soul shone in his form and features, and in his more than kingly presence.

The Mother knew that Face! It was her son; and the voice which she had heard before she heard again — "Your son, become the Leader of a People, defies Hunger, Plague, and Cold, and holds the serenity of his soul against foes abroad and traitors at home, for God's voice speaks to him again *in the Memory of his Mother's Prayer.*"

At last there came a scene which filled every avenue of her heart with joy — joy too deep for words or tears.

A man of more than regal presence stood among a countless multitude of freemen, and while their shouts went up to Heaven, he gave back into their hands the sword which had achieved their Freedom.

And in that moment, his large grey eyes flashing as they gazed upon the countless multitude, brightened with a kindlier, holier lustre, as the heart of the Great Man was filled with the Memory of his Mother's Face — of that gentle voice which had whispered Religion in his ear — of that Soul which had infused its holy nature into his own breast ——

These scenes the Mother beheld with every varied emotion. But the last scene fired every pulse with a calm rapture, and shed the baptism of unutterable peace upon her soul.

But once more that voice, which came through darkness and silence, spoke to her —

"Mother! *This will be the life of your babe, in case you are true to your trust.* For God gives into every Mother's hands the life, the Destiny of her child."

Then, after the voice was still, came a scene at once dark and crushing. With chilled blood and a heart slowly struggling under an overwhelming Terror, the Mother beheld it — a Dream composed of a succession of vivid pictures.

First, a wild boy standing upon a vessel's deck, amid the darkness of an ocean storm. His defiant lip and blasphemous eye, his hand uplifted in scorn at the lightning which circled over him — twining among the clouds like a fiery serpent over a pall — all attested a reckless and outcast soul.

No Mother's Prayer shed its blessing on his corrugated brow — no memory of a Mother's teachings came to bless the heart of the Outcast Boy.

And the Outcast Boy ripened into a Murderer before the Mother's eyes — and the Murderer became a Pirate — and at last the dread drama terminated on a desert island, on whose bleak shore a skeleton, washed by the waves from its rude grave, glared whitely in the tropic sun.

And the skeleton — all that remained of the Murderer and the Pirate — was her son, the Babe which now slumbered beneath her outspread hands!

"*There is no blessing upon the Skeleton, for no Mother's Memory comes to blossom in good deeds over the dead*"——

She heard the voice once more —

"*And this, O Mother, will be the Future of your child, deprived of a Mother's teachings and a Mother's prayer.*"

With the last accent of that voice her vision passed away.

The Babe was still there — slumbering in the twilight hour — with its hands clasped and the white flower upon its heart.

An image of Peace — a glimpse of Eden — centred in the serenity of the summer twilight, seemed that Child slumbering beneath its Mother's gaze.

Her mind still agitated by her Dream — with its terrible picture of a child unblest by a Mother's Prayer; and its divine picture of a child hallowed by that Prayer — she turned from the window, leaving the Babe in the shadowy recess.

The ray of a candle trembled through the gloom.

The candle stood upon a table, which, covered with a white cloth, resembled an altar.

Upon the cloth, beside the candle, appeared

a white urn, or vase, filled with clear cold water.

And there stood a man of venerable presence, a Minister of God, with the father of the babe at his side. The wrinkled face, the white hair of the Preacher, were in strong but not unpleasing contrast with the young manhood of the Father.

Around were grouped a few friends — men and women, whose faces appeared in the dim light, and who had come to witness the Baptism of the Child.

And the Mother bore the Babe from its resting place — it opened its eyes as she raised it, and clutched the stray flower with its tiny hand.

And she stood by the baptismal vase, while the holy words were said, while the withered hand of the Priest sprinkled the blessed drops upon the white brow of that sinless babe, and all the while it gazed wonderingly around, clutching the stray flower in its little hand.

And that tiny hand should one day clutch a Battle Blade, and carve a Nation's Freedom with a Hero's Sword.

Holy were the words which fell from the lips of the Preacher — holy the baptism which he sprinkled upon the brow of unconscious innocence — but the Mother, as she girdled the Babe to her bosom and remembered her dream, could not banish the thought — that the holiest baptism which Earth could offer up to the eye of God — holier than words, or forms, or sprinkled water — was the Baptism of a

MOTHER'S PRAYER.

LEGEND THIRD.

THE YOUTH OF WASHINGTON.

It is not the most difficult thing in the world to write the history of a battle. The tramp of legions, the crash of contending foemen, the waving of banners — arms glittering here, and the cold faces of the dead glowing yonder, in the battle flash — these form a picture that strikes the heart at once, and makes its mark forever.

But who can write the history of a Soul?

Who can tell how the germ of heroism, the idea of greatness first swells in the mind of the Boy, and slowly ripens into full life?

We have seen Washington the President. We have known Washington the General. Shall we look into the soul of Washington the Boy? Shall we behold the almost imperceptible gradations which marked the progress of that soul into manhood? Shall we witness the silent, gradual, ceaseless EDUCATION of that soul?

How was Washington educated? Did he lounge away five years of his life within the walls of a college, occupied in removing the shrouds from the mummies of Classic Literature, busy in familiarizing his mind with the elaborate pollutions of Grecian mythology, or in analyzing the hollow philosophies of the academy and portico?

No. His education was on a broader, vaster scale.

At seventeen he leaves the common school, where he had received the plain rudiments of an English education, and with knapsack strapped to his shoulders, surveyor's instruments in his hand, he goes forth, a pilgrim among the mountains. Where there is blue sky, where the tumultuous river hews its way through colossal cliffs, where the great peaks of the Alleghanies rise like immense altars into the heavens — such were the scenes in which the soul of Washington was educated.

He went forth a wanderer into the wilderness. At night he stretched his limbs in the depths of the forest, or rose to look upon the stars, as they shone in upon the awful night of the wilderness, or sat down with the red men by their council fire, and learned from this strange race the traditions of the lost nations of America.

Three years of his life glide away while he sojourns among the scenes of nature's grandeur. Those three years form his character, and shape his soul. Glimpses of the future come upon him like those blushes of radiance in the day-break sky, which announce the rising of the sun.

Shall we learn the manner of his communion with nature and with God?

We know it is beneath the *dignity* of history to look even for an instant into the heart. We know that vague generalities, misty outlines, compact and well-proportioned falsehoods, sprinkled with a dash of what is called philosophy — too often constitute the object and the manner of history.

Shall we depart a little while from the respectable regularities of history, which too often resemble the regular tactics of Braddock on his fatal field, and call tradition and legend to our aid? Tradition and legend, which, in their vivid but irregular details, remind us forcibly of the crude style of battle which young Washington so fruitlessly commended to the notice of the regular general, on the battle day of Monongahela.

Learn, then, the manner of young Washington's communion with nature and with God.

But first learn and know by heart the scenes in which his boyhood passed away.

Over a tumultuous torrent, high in the upper air, there hangs a bridge of rock, fashioned by the hand of Nature, with the peaks of granite mountains for its horizon. Two hundred feet above the foaming waves you behold this arch, which in its very ruggedness, looks graceful as a floating scarf. Over the waves, looking through the arch, you catch a vision of colossal cliffs, with a glimpse of smiling sky. Advance to the parapet of this bridge — cling to the shrubs that grow there — look below! Your heart grows sick — your brain reels.

Stand in the shadow of the arch, and look above. How beautiful! While the torrent sparkles at your feet, yonder, in the very Heaven, the Arch of Rock fills your eye, and spans the abyss, with giant trees upon its brow.

To the Natural Bridge, Washington, the young pilgrim came. He stood by the waves at sunset — he drank in the rugged sublimity of the scene. And when the morning came, with an unfaltering step, and hand that never shook, not for an instant, with one pulse of fear, he climbed the awful height — he wrote his name upon the rock — he stood upon the summit, beneath the tall pine, and saw the march of day among the mountains.

Who shall picture his emotions in that hour?

As his unfaltering hand traced the name upon the rock, did he dream of the day when that name should be stamped upon the history of his country, and written not in stone, but in the throbs of living hearts?

As he stood upon the arch, and saw the torrent sparkle dimly far below, while the kiss of light was glittering on the mountain tops, did no vision of the battle field, no shadowy presentiment of glory, gleam awfully before his flashing eyes?

Again; another scene of Washington's education.

There is a river which sparkles beautifully among its leafy banks — glides on as smoothly as the dream of sinless slumber; but even as you gaze upon its glassy waves, it rushes from your sight. It glides over a bed of rocks, and then through a yawning abyss sinks with one sullen plunge into the bosom of the earth. On one side you behold its smooth waters — at your feet the abyss — and yonder, an undulating meadow. Yes, where should be the course of the river, you behold slopes of grass and flowers.

It is simply called the Lost River.

It fills you with inexplicable emotions to see this beautiful stream, now flashing in the sunlight, now — ere you can count one — lost in a dismal cavern, with flowers growing upon its grave.

Here Washington, the young pilgrim, wandered oftentime, and gazed with a full heart upon the mysterious river.

"Shall my life be like that river? Gliding smoothly on — shining in sunlight, only to plunge, without a moment's warning, into night and eternity."

Did no thought like this cross the young pilgrim's soul? In that wondrous river he beheld a symbol of a brave life, suddenly plunged in darkness. Or, it may be, of a great heart, hurled into obscurity, only to rise more beautiful and strong, after the night was over and the darkness gone. For after three miles of darkness, the lost river comes sparkling into light again, singing for very gladness, as it rushes from the cavern into open air.

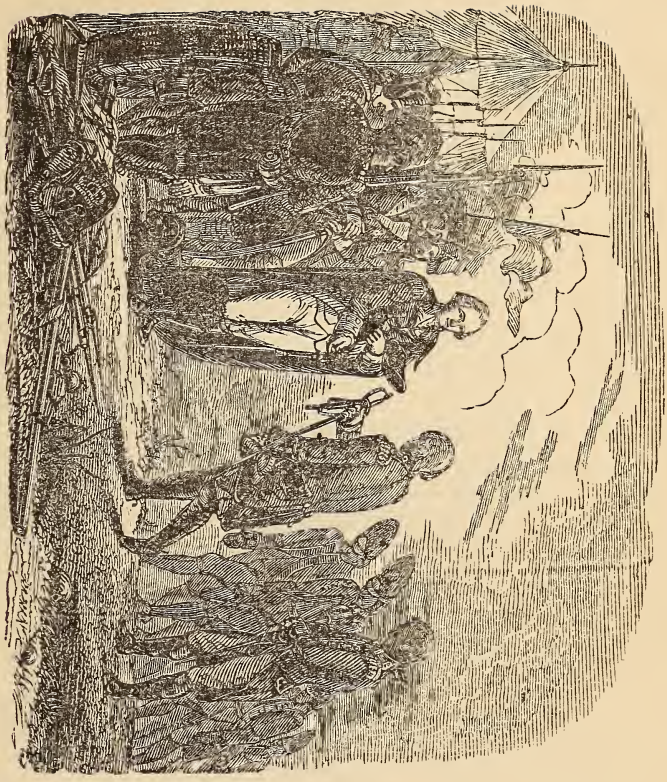
Amid scenes like these the youth of Washington was passed. He grew to manhood amid the glorious images of unpolluted nature. Now, pausing near the mountain top, he saw the valleys of Virginia fade far away, in one long smile of verdure and sunshine, with the Potomac, like a silver thread, in the distance.

Now battling for life, amid hunger, snow, and savage foes, he makes his bed in the hollow of the rock, or sets his destiny afloat amid the waves and ice of a wintry river

There is one picture in the life of Washington, the Boy, which has ever impressed my soul.

It is not so much that picture of young Washington, seated at the feet of his widowed mother, gazing into her pale face, drinking the fathomless affection of her mild eyes, and for her sake renouncing the glittering prospect of an ocean life, and laurels gathered from its gory waves.

This picture, in its simplicity, is very beau-



SURRENDER OF CORNWALLIS.

tiful. But it is another picture which enchains me. Behold it.

By the side of a lonely stream, in the depth of a green woodland, sits a boy of fourteen — shut out from all the world, alone with his heart — his finger laid upon an opened volume, while his large grey eye gazes vacantly into the deep waters.

And that volume is the old Family Bible, marked with the name of his ancestor, John Washington; and from its large letters look forth the Prophets of Israel, and from its pages, printed in antique style, the face of JESUS smiles in upon the soul of the dreaming boy.

Washington the boy, alone with the old Bible which his ancestor, a wanderer and an exile, brought from the English shore — alone with the prophets and the warriors of long distant ages — shut in from the world by the awful forms of revelation — now wandering with the Patriarchs under the shade of palms, among the white flocks — now lingering by Samaria's well, while the Divine voice melts in accents of unutterable music upon the stillness of noonday.

Let us for a few moments survey the various EPOCHA of the youth of Washington.

At the age of ten years he is left an orphan; from the hour of his father's death he is educated by his widowed mother.

At the age of fourteen a midshipman's warrant is offered to him — with a brilliant prospect of naval glory in the distance. He accepts the warrant — his destiny seems trembling in the balance — when his mother, who already saw a nobler theatre open before her boy, induces him to surrender the idea of an ocean life.

He is seventeen when he takes up the instruments of the surveyor's craft, and crossing the Alleghanies, beholds, for the first time, the customs of the Indian people.

Three years pass, and he is a pilgrim amid the forms of external nature.

We behold him on the ocean, amid the terror of its storms, and very near the doom of its shipwrecks. His heart pillows the head of a dying brother; he accompanies Laurence Washington on a voyage to Barbadoes, and is absent on the ocean, and on the shores of a strange land, from the fall of 1751 until the spring of 1752.

When Laurence dies, his young brother, George Washington, a youth of twenty years, is appointed executor of his immense estates.

At the age of twenty-one, he is designated by the Governor of Virginia as a Commissioner to treat with the hostile French and their Indian allies, who threaten our western borders. In the pursuit of the object of this mission, he journeys 560 miles into the trackless wilderness.

He is twenty-two when he first mingles in battle; his sword is unsheathed July 3, 1754, at the fight of the Great Meadows.

And at the age of twenty-three, July 9th, 1775, he shares in the dangers of Braddock's field, and saves the wreck of the defeated army.

The great epochs of the Youth of Washington are written in the preceding paragraphs. A wonderful youth indeed! From the common school-house into the untrodden wilderness; from the couch of a dying brother into the terror of battle, Washington had already *lived a life*, before he was twenty-three years old.

Let us, my friends, write the unwritten history of Washington, Not the dim outline which History sketches, but a picture of the Man — with color, shape, life and voice. Yes, life; for as we go on, among the shrines of the Past, the dead will live with us; and voice, too; for as we question the ghosts of other days, they will answer us, although the shadows of a hundred years brood over their graves.

And ere we hasten forth upon our journey, let us for a moment compare the youth of Washington with the boyhood of Arnold.

Washington, nourished by the counsels of a mother, surrounded by powerful friends, and with many a kind hand for his brow when it was stricken with fever, many a kind voice for his heart when it was heavy with sorrow.

Arnold, a friendless boy, left by an intemperate father to the — world; guided, it is true, by a kind mother, but a mother who saw all the clouds of misfortune lowering upon her path, and felt the heaviest blows of misery upon her breast.

A contrast of terrible meaning.

Washington learns from his mother to bear all, to suffer all, and to hold on, through calm and storm to the right.

Washington becomes the Man of a World.

Arnold, though swayed for a while by the lessons of his mother, learns the bitter lesson which the world teaches to him — learn by heart to return hate with hate, and to fling wrong into the face of wrong.

Arnold becomes the Omen of a world.

Learn from this the awful importance of those early influences which shape the mind and mould the heart. Youth is a tender plant — beware how you tread upon it! Nurse it generously, and one day it will bloom before you in the manhood of a Washington. Crush it, and it will one day wound your heel with the serpent sting of Arnold.

And while we read together the great lesson of Washington s youth, and trace, side by side, the gradual steps by which he rose to greatness, let us never forget that there was one blessing which followed him like a good angel, and breathed upon his soul the very atmosphere of Heaven — "The Memory of Mary his Mother!"

LEGEND FOURTH.

THE BOY AND THE BOOK.

One hour of silence and of thought.

Who shall paint its history? What power of language, what eloquence of speech, can paint the day-dreams that come like ghosts over the mind of boyhood, and fling their shadowy hands toward a distant but a gorgeous future?

One summer day, upon a rock which overhung a wood-embosomed brook, there sat a boy of fourteen years, clasping his hand over a book which rested on his knee, while his absent gaze was fixed upon the wave below.

That wave, framed in foliage, mirrored in a cloudless sky, warmed by the rays of a declining sun.

The slender form of the boy was clad in a dress of coarse grey; his falling collar disclosed his white throat; his brown hair, shadowed features remarkable at once for their firmly chisseled outlines, and their expression of precocious thought. Those grey eyes, warming and dilating under the boldly defined brows, shone with the rapture of some absorbing day-dream.

Near the boy, reclining on the rock which overhung the stream, arose an aged oak, whose massive trunk was garlanded with vines, while it extended one rugged and gnarled limb, thick with leaves, over the bosom of the waters.

And the boy reclining on the rock, and the old tree clad in vines, looked, together, like an image of Youth stretched at the feet of the venerable Past.

On the rock, beside the boy, were scattered various things which seem to indicate the sports of youth, mingled with the grave thought of manhood. A bow and three arrows — a compass — a fishing rod, and a rusted sword, battered in the handle and dented in the blade.

But the eye of the boy was fixed upon the waters with a dreamy, absent glance. He sat for a long time like a statue — a dumb thing, without power of speech or motion — his clasped hands lay upon the old book, supported by his knee.

Vines, whose green leaves embraced flowers white as snow, were dipping in the waters with every breath of the summer air — a solitary bird hung trembling on the oaken bough, singing as it swung, and filling the place with bursts of wild music — the sun bathed the mass of foliage with his rays, while yonder wall of leaves was veiled in shadows — it was a beautiful scene, an hour of peace, but the soul of the boy was far away.

Once in the space of an hour he moved his head. It was to grasp the hilt of the rusted sword. Then something like a shadow passed over his face, and his lip curled in a kind of defiant smile.

Next his hand rested upon the book. A massive volume, bound in dark leather, with the traces of age upon its broad leaves, the odor of time upon its bold and rugged type. He lifted one lid of the book, and a blank leaf was revealed — blank, save that it bore a name, written in a quaint, round hand —

JOHN WASHINGTON — 1657.

For this book, more than a hundred years old, had been brought from England by the grandfather of this boy, at least one hundred years before this summer day. That ancestor, an exile from his native soil, brought the book with him to the wilds of Virginia, and, believe me, it brought a blessing with it: for, after soothing many an hour of pain — lifting up many a head bowed down by sickness — nerving many a heart chilled by death — the book was now, even in this calm summer hour, doing its

wondrous work in the brain of the dreaming boy.

For there was power in the book.

He began to turn its pages — slowly, and with an absent eye; and as the broad leaves passed between his fingers, the words printed there took form and shape before the eye of the boy, and spoke to his soul with low, soft tones, very musical, and yet emphatic with a divine power.

These were the visions which glided into the soul of the boy, and made his heart beat and his eye burn:

He saw a whole people, herded together in a slavery, that neither spared the white hairs of age from its scorn, nor the frail limbs of infancy from its lash. It was in a far distant land, where a great river washed the base of pyramids, and where plains blooming with gardens and grand with temples, were canopied by a sky without one cloud. And no voice came to cheer this people in their slavery, no hand was extended to lift them from their bondage; their history was written in two words — Tears and Death.

But the time came when a son of a slave raised his arm against the oppressor of his brethren, and one night he spoke to the slaves, even to the people of his race, and bade them go out from bondage in the name of God!

And the slaves heard the voice of this son of a slave, and in the blackness of an awful night — when every lord was weeping over the corse of his first born — they went forth, a countless hive of bondsmen, swarming to their freedom. For they felt that the voice of God spoke from the lips of the son of a slave, and so through the gloom of night they began their sacred march of freedom. And the sea parted before them, and become dry land for the footsteps of the slaves, and rolled back in angry waves upon the armies of the oppressors who pursued them.

The name of that people was ISRAEL — and the son of the slave was MOSES.

Do you wonder that the heart of the boy burned within him, as he read the page which recorded the great Exodus? He read of Moses on the mountain top, in council with God — of Moses on Mount Pisgah, looking into a land like Eden — he read of the march in the wilderness — of the pillar which was cloud by day and fire by night — and then the thought crossed his young soul —

"Shall the people of the New World be trodden in bondage, and will the Lord send to them in their hour of darkness, a *Moses* — a DELIVERER?'

The Boy turned over the pages of the Book:—

New visions!

The Patriot DAVID hunted by Saul the King, and hemmed in the cave of Adullam, like a savage beast, his little band devoted to death, his own body doomed to fill a Traitor's grave. The King Solomon, rearing a Temple to the Living God, and embodying all the glories of a dream, in cedar and gold and stone. The Prophet Isaiah, singing, with his divine music, of the coming of a Blessed Time, when Hatred should be dumb, and the redeemed World listen only to the voice of Love. Judas Maccabeus fighting for his country, even amid her fallen altars, and holding on to her sacred banner-staff, even when the land for which he fought produced no other fruit than corses — the Priest-Hero battling for the land of David against the legions of Rome, the cohorts of an enslaved World.

These visions, and others as mighty and sublime, started from the pages of the Book, and glided into the soul of the dreaming boy.

And these are the lessons which the old Book impressed upon the mind of the Boy:

The battle which is waged for Freedom is holy in the sight of God

It is more glorious to perish on the scaffold — even by the most abhorrent form of death, by the axe, the cord, or the dagger — than to live tamely under the yoke of Slavery.

The declining sun cast his last ray upon the water — the breath of evening was among the trees. And yet the boy, with a brightening eye and a swelling heart, still turned over the pages of the Book —

He saw a star shine through the gloom of night, and move gently onward over plains dotted with the shepherd's flock, and pause at length above an humble shed, flinging its rays upon the brow of a new-born Child.

This was the most beautiful dream of all.

For something there was in the life of that Child, born so humbly in a way-side shed, and

yet baptised in its first hour by the rays of a star, that melted into the heart at once, and filled it with a Peace unutterable.

The Boy read on.

The Child, grown to Boyhood, stands up in a lofty temple, and confutes grave Doctors and learned Scribes — heaps confusion upon their cunning and puts their intricate code of lies to shame — by the simple learning of a Heart that cannot Hate, a Heart that finds Truth and Law and Religion in the simple words — "Love one another."

Then came scenes that made the heart of the boy beat with pulsations of vivid joy, succeeded by oppressive sadness. His eyes were drowned in tears. For the Child of whom he read, had grown to manhood. He was derided by the Priests, mocked by the minions of Kings, crowned with thorns, and put to death on a felon's tree — every instant of his agony, accompanied by some unutterable mockery. And with all this — He — the being of whom the Boy was reading — gave to his enemies love for their scorn, blessings for their blows — yes, to the World which disowned him, and raised him in mockery upon its breast, he bequeathed a deathless Testament of Forgiveness, a holy Covenant of Brotherhood. And while the Boy was reading, the evening shadows fell. The sun passed down the sky, leaving only one smile of light upon the waters. And yet the Face of the Divine Being seemed to start from the very gloom, and look with its deathless eyes into the very eyes of the dreaming Boy.

Do you assert that the lesson which the old Book taught to the mind and the heart of the Boy — in this still hour — ever lost its influence, ever passed away?

Or, did the words of the Book, dropping imperceptibly into the heart of that Boy — gentle as fragrant rain upon an opening flower and yet mightier than armies — appear in his Future life, in the shape of Deeds that win the love of a World?

Who shall count the imperceptible steps by which the soul of youth ascends to manhood, gathering fresh vigor at every step, and coming freer and bolder into the light, as the summit grows near and nearer?

Who shall estimate the influence which the old Book exercised upon the life of the solitary Boy?

Other books would have taught him Glory in the place of Duty — the life of Alexander the Great would have learned him the blessing of wholesale murder — the history of Oliver Cromwell might have taught him the right to destroy one form of oppression by another form as galling.

But the old Book had a different lesson. From the shadows of dead centuries it spoke to the heart of that Boy. Its words took shape, and rose before him, even from the tombs of long buried ages. And its lesson was simply — it is right to battle in the cause of freedom, because God has given the earth and its fruits to all his children — All. Yet never, even in warring for the right, forget that perfect freedom is only found in perfect love.

LEGEND FIFTH.

THE CHALLENGE.

One evening in the fall of 1754, three gentlemen were seated in a quiet room of an Inn, talking with each other with evident earnestness, on a subject of much importance.

It was a comfortable chamber, with carefully sanded floor, high-backed oaken chairs, and a side-board, or beaufet, covered with decanters and glasses. The centre of the room was occupied by a large table, on which a lighted candle appeared, with a pair of pistols on one side, a sheet of paper, pens and an ink-stand on the other. And while the light of the candle fell over the animated faces of the three gentlemen, and the slight fire burning on the hearth imbued the atmosphere with comfortable warmth, they maintained their conversation with energetic gestures, yet in a subdued and whispering tone.

The eldest of the three, a grim old man, with bald head, and grey whiskers on his bronzed cheek, was clad in a scarlet uniform. His form was rather portly: the expression of his grey eyes full of settled spleen; the very wrinkles about his compressed lips, indicated a hasty and irascible temper. The others, when they spoke to him, called him "Captain," for, some years before, he had served in the regular force of the British Army, and although he had long resigned his commission, the odor of his dignity, as well as the glitter of the uniform, clung around him still.

He sat at the head of the table, resting his hand upon the sheet of letter paper on which he was writing, and writing a challenge for a Duel.

The second of the party, a tall man, with fair complexion, yet firm and regular features, was clad in the costume of a planter; he sat in an arm chair, calmly smoking a cigar, and now and then adding a word, which was to the conversation like a spark to a keg of gunpowder. He was called "'Squire."

The third, a slender young man, almost effeminate in his appearance, and attired in a close-fitting British uniform, sat at the foot of the table, his delicate hands laid upon the pistols. They were intended for the anticipated duel. The eyes of this young man, large, dark, and intensely brilliant, illumined a pale, thoughtful face, and his mouth was impressed with a smile, which had as much of scorn as of mirth for its meaning. He was known by the others as "the Ensign."

And these three men, by the light of a wax candle, cheered by the kindly warmth of a wood fire, had secluded themselves in the Inn-room, in the early hours of an autumnal evening, in order to plan a deadly combat, and prepare the way over which two living men might journey speedily to their coffins and the grave-yard.

It was, in fact, a Council of War.

Let us listen to the "Ensign," while he explains the cause of the duel; there is music in his delicately modulated voice:

"This day, gentlemen, our town was the scene of the greatest excitement. An election was held for a member of Assembly: of course there was a great crowd, and a vast deal of hard talking and hard swearing. The excitement was no means diminished by the presence of a regiment of soldiers, who now make their quarters in the town. I have the honor to hold the commission of "Ensign" in that regiment, gentlemen, as you well know. The colonel is idolized by his men, although he is, like myself, only a boy of twenty-two. You know the history of his campaign in the West, among the French and Indians. What Virginian does not know it by heart? And

this Colonel, idolized by his men, loved by every Virginian heart, was this day, in the presence of hundreds — yes, in the court-yard of Alexandria — levelled to the earth by a blow from a club!"

The Ensign lifted the pistols, and glanced into the faces of his friends, as if to note the effect of his words.

"Saw it myself," said the 'Squire, speaking between puffs of smoke. "Colonel was struck to the earth, by a man not five feet high; Colonel is six feet three inches. Dispute about the election merits of the different candidates. Colonel gave Payne the lie! and Payne seized a club and let him have it. Sum total of the whole matter — the lie and the blow have passed, and they *must* fight."

The 'Squire knocked the ashes from his cigar.

"I have written the challenge," gruffly exclaimed the Captain, looking round with an emphatic grimace. "Ensign, will you act as the Colonel's friend, or shall I? As pretty a little affair as I ever saw. They can take a little bit of green meadow, by daylight to-morrow, and fire a couple of rounds, and settle the matter like — gentlemen."

And the worthy Captain confirmed his sentiment with an oath of remarkable emphasis.

"They must fight, said the 'Squire, "as *Virginians!*"

"The Colonel will be forever disgraced as a soldier unless he shoots this Payne," said the Ensign, in his mild voice.

"Zounds gentlemen, a blow! D'ye hear me, a blow with a club ——" began the Captain.

"In the open court-yard, too, in the presence of hundreds," interrupted the 'Squire.

"The very soldiers would have massacred Payne, if the Colonel had not interfered," said the Ensign, joining in the chorus. "Certainly it is the most aggravated case that ever came to my notice."

It was an aggravated case. The Colonel, a gallant youth of twenty-two, who had done brave service in the wilderness, to be degraded by a blow, and not only covered with insult, but struck to the very earth, at the feet of his antagonist. It was galling. There was no other way of redressing the wrong, and washing out the insult, save in the blood of one or other, or both of the parties. And then ——

"I *know* the Colonel," said the Ensign, still handling the pistols; "calm and resolved in the hour of battle, he is a man of impetuous temper; there is hot blood in his veins."

"He is in the next chamber," whispered the 'Squire, "boiling over with a sense of the insult, no doubt. Do not speak loud. He will overhear us — it is not well to drive him to madness."

"And yet he must hear us," — the portly Captain started from his chair, "and without delay. For, odds-blood, d'ye see, we must arrange the *preliminaries*."

He moved to the door of the next chamber, holding the written challenge in his hand. The Ensign followed, grasping the pistols, and the 'Squire came next with his — cigar.

The Captain knocked — a pause — no answer.

"He is mad with excitement, no doubt," whispered the ex-officer, turning to his comrades with a sly leer, for he considered a duel as a capital joke, and the funeral which followed it, as a striking lesson for the young.

He pushed open the door, and the party entered the room in which the Colonel sat alone — doubtless chafed to very madness by the memory of the wrong.

A wax candle, burning on a table, revealed the furniture of a spacious chamber, and the figure of a gentleman, absorbed in writing. And while he wrote, with his hand gliding rapidly over the paper, he cast his eyes, very often, toward a miniature which lay near his hand. His back was turned toward the three; of course they could not see his face nor remark the agitation of his features.

He did not hear the opening door, nor heed the sound of footsteps, but absorbed by his thoughts, continued writing.

"Go forward, and tap him on the shoulder," whispered the Colonel to the Ensign.

The Ensign advanced on tip-toe, and gliding over the dark mahogany floor, raised his hand to place it on the Colonel's shoulder, when his eye was arrested by the miniature, and his uplifted hand dropped by his side.

He sank backward, with a noiseless footstep, and whispered to the gruff Captain.

"I cannot do it now. It is his mother's picture. He is writing to her—a *last letter*, may be."

The 'Squire now assumed the task, and said, "Good evening, Colonel!" in a loud, hearty voice.

The Colonel rose, and greeted his visitors with a manner which combined all the grace and warmth of youth with the dignity of riper years.

As he stood near the table, his form in all its majesty of stature, and his face with all its firmness of character, disclosed by the light, the three gentlemen could not but acknowledge that he presented a splendid mark for a duelling pistol.

The mark of the blow darkened his white forehead. His hair, nut brown in color, and without powder, fell in careless masses aside from his face. He was very pale; his eyes were bloodshot, and from his loosened cravat to his torn ruffles, everything about his attire, had a wild and disordered appearance.

As he stood with one hand resting on the table, and the other extended toward his friends, they might recognize that blue uniform, which had been marked many a time by the bullet of the foe.

"I have written a *challenge*, Colonel," said the Captain, advancing.

"He struck you down in the presence of hundreds"—and the Ensign drew near.

"As a Virginian you must fight;"—the Planter also advanced.

"Gentlemen—my friends—" said the Colonel, in a voice which was tremulous with emotion, "you say very justly to me, '*you must fight*.' This is the law of the code of honor; is it not? Well: I will meet Mr. Payne. I have made my preparations. I have just written a letter to my mother, in which I inform her that to-morrow morning I will go out into a meadow, and let Mr. Payne shoot me through the heart. That is right—is it not?"

"But you forget, my dear Colonel, that you are decidedly the best shot of the two. And as for the sword, Payne cannot come near you. You will shoot Payne, my dear Colonel, and there the matter will end."

The Ensign uttered these words in his mildest voice, and with the most gentlemanly bow in the world.

"Yes, it is true the matter will end there," said the Colonel, as he saw his friends encircle him, "unless, indeed, some day or other I should happen to meet a wife, or a mother, or even a sister and hear words like those whispered in my ear—'*Murderer! I demand my child!* or my '*brother!*' or yet my '*husband!*' This, you will confess, would be very unpleasant."

The three friends were silent.

The Planter lit the end of his cigar. The Ensign examined the mountings of the pistols. The Captain began to be very much interested in the words of the written challenge.

And the Colonel, looking from face to face, awaited an answer.

"So you all see, my good friends, that if there is to be a corpse"—he paused, and the three friends began to feel uneasy—"a corpse in this affair, I would much rather be that corpse myself, than to have the weight of a murder on my soul."

"But the insult—it was galling," cried the Ensign, his face flushed and his eye brightening.

"It was indeed galling," said the Colonel, "but the provocation?"

"You gave him the lie! and you were right, by ——!" said the Captain, in his deepest bass.

"Let us understand the question fully," resumed the Colonel, in that deep tone, and with that steady glance which exercised an irresistible influence over his friends. "I am six feet three inches in height. You all acknowledge that I possess great personal strength. Mr. Payne, on the contrary, is neither remarkable for his stature nor for his physical power. And I—in the presence of my soldiers and my friends, call Mr. Payne by the most opprobrious word known in our language. Was I right, or was I wrong, my friends? Which do you most admire, gentlemen, my *gallantry* in thus insulting Mr. Payne, or the courage of Mr. Payne in knocking me down—by an unexpected blow, it is true—but in the presence of my soldiers and my friends?"

A deep pause followed these words.

Zounds! If I can comprehend you, Colonel," cried the Captain.

"Am I to shoot Mr. Payne because I insulted him?" asked the Colonel!—"or, am I to shoot him because he was too brave to bear my insult? These are questions which I would like settled before I kill him, gentlemen."

And the Colonel turned away—looked forth from the window upon the star-lit sky—while his three friends gazed wonderingly in each other's faces.

The Colonel remained by the window for at least five minutes, gazing upon the sky, while the mark of the blow darkened over his forehead. His thoughts may have been dark, bitter—but while he stood there, his three friends remained near the table, looking into one another's faces, but without speaking a word.

"If you were in my place, Ensign, what would *you* do?" asked the Colonel, as he came toward the light again.

"I would sooner be tied to a tree, among the Indians, with their scalping knives flashing before my face, than to bear that blow!" said the Ensign, with a gleaming eye.

"And I would sooner lead off ten forlorn hopes, old as I am, than to avoid one challenge, or skulk one duel!"

The old soldier pulled his whiskers with needless violence, and stamped his foot upon the floor until the chamber shook again.

"And as for me, I'm neither a young nor an old soldier, but as a Virginian, sooner than bear that blow, I would blow my brains out with one of these pistols."

The Colonel lowered his head—his face was shadowed by thought.

"*Wherefore*, gentlemen?" he asked, in a changed voice, as he shaded his eyes with his hand.

"Because, to refuse to fight, in a case like this, is to wear the name of a—COWARD."

"And you have not the *courage* to wear the name of *coward?*" exclaimed the Colonel, still shading his face—"Yes, gentlemen,"—and he raised his face, no longer gloomy and pale, but flushed and smiling—"by your own confession, the courage manifested in dying at an Indian stake, or in perishing in a forlorn hope, or in blowing one's brains out with a suicide's pistol, is nothing—absolutely nothing—compared with that kind of courage which enables a man to face the name of coward, aye, and wear it too!"

The young Colonel was magnificent in battle—stately in the ball room—glorious on his war horse—but now, as he pronounced these words, with a flushed cheek, brilliant eye, and clear deep voice, his three friends acknowledged in their whispers that although his ideas were "deuced bad," his appearance, his manner, was imposing beyond all power of words.

The countenance of the three friends, however, were clouded.

"My dear fellow," and the pale Ensign laid his hand upon the arm of his friend; "I have fought by your side. You know me. These things *abstractly* considered, mark you, are precisely as you say. But come to the *practical* view of the matter. There is not a young man in Virginia with prospects like yours. You will soon be called upon to lead your regiment against the common enemy, to wit, the allied bands of French and Indians. But you cannot go out to battle for your country with a *dishonored* name. You have been disgraced by a blow—*disgraced*, mark you. You must wash out your disgrace in blood."

The Ensign spoke with feeling. His companions murmured assent.

The brow of the Colonel grew cloudy; his eyes brightened with a deadly fire.

"There must be a duel," he said with something like scorn or vengeance on his lip. "Gentlemen will you excuse me for half an hour? I myself will write the challenge."

The three friends retired from the room, and the Colonel was left alone.

Alone, with the fatal mark upon his forehead, the insult rankling in his heart, and the—face of his widowed mother before his eyes.

We dare not describe the emotions of that half hour.

When it passed, he came forth, and stood on the threshold, holding a billet in his right hand. The three friends started to their feet, with one movement of surprise. The Colonel stood before them, not in military array, but in festival costume; his hair carefully powdered,

his dark attire relieved by a white cravat and white waistcoat, snow-white ruffles about his hands, and neat diamond buckles on his shoes. By his side he wore a plain dress sword.

But his powdered hair and white cravat, while they threw his remarkable features into bold relief, and by contrast, gave a deeper bloom to his cheek, a clearer light to his eyes, only made the mark on his forehead more dark and palpable.

"Which of you will hear this challenge to Mr. Payne?"

The three friends answered as with one voice — "I will — and I — and I!"

"*In my room — at an early hour — to-morrow!*" said the Colonel, very calmly, but with a singular emphasis upon the words. "You understand, gentlemen?"

He handed the challenge to the Ensign.

"In your room" — began the portly Captain.

"*In my room*, my good friend — for especial reasons," answered the young officer, "and hark ye, Captain! Let as many of our mutual friends, as were witnesses to the insult be present, at the hour of seven, you will remember?"

"That's it, my boy," cried the bluff Captain. "Now you begin to talk!"

But the Ensign did not like the strange calmness of the Colonel's face, nor did the Planter know how to construe his festival attire.

"You are not in uniform, Colonel," he whispered.

"Oh, no!" and the Colonel glanced at his attire; "you remember there is a ball this evening. I must be present. There will be many of our fair ladies and a goodly array of gentlemen, no doubt. On no account would I be absent from the ball"—

"Yet you may have some little affairs to arrange," hinted the Ensign — "before a duel, Colonel, there are letters to write, and you will need some sleep" —

The Colonel took his brother officer by the hand and looked intently into his eyes —

"Harry! Do you think a man who has resolved to commit murder by the morrow's light, can pass the night before the deed, in writing letters, or in wholesome slumber, cheered by pleasant dreams? No! If I must murder, or be murdered to morrow morning, for the sake of Honor, I will pass this night in the dance — among beautiful ladies — and groups of friends. We will have gaiety — dance — song! Come, my friends — who's for the ball?"

And the gallant Colonel led forth his friends to the festival of that night — all save the Ensign, who went to bear the challenge And whether the beautiful women of Virginia flouted in the dance, or strains of merry music awoke the echoes of the lighted hall, or groups of admirers clustered round some fair one, pre-eminent for her loveliness — still, amid every form of gaiety, the Colonel was the most prominent; the first, the liveliest and the handsomest of all the men who were gathered there.

And all the while as a King might bear his crown, or a victor his laurels, the Colonel bore the livid marks upon his forehead.

And the dancers who saw him, so gallant and so gay — shuddered when they saw the wound of the fatal blow upon his forehead — and many a fair daughter of Virginia whispered, with accents of undisguised terror, the words — "To-morrow! * * * The Duel!"

LEGEND SIXTH.

THE DUEL:

OR, COURAGE THAT IS NOT AFRAID OF THE NAME OF "COWARD."

The morrow came.

The room of the Colonel in the Inn of Alexandria, was the theatre of a remarkable scene. Through the uncurtained windows came the light of the early dawn, and there you might behold a glimpse of a river, glimmering faintly in the ray of a fading star.

Silence reigned through the chamber — silence and gloom — although some twenty persons were assembled there. In one corner stood the bed, with unruffled coverlet; in the centre was the table, and around were seated the gentlemen who had been summoned as witnesses of the approaching Duel.

These gentlemen — some of whom were officers in the Colonel's regiment, others planters of broad lands and immense fortunes — sat in silence, gazing with folded arms upon the table which stood in the centre, or through the gloom into each others' faces.

The bluff Captain was there, but he had forgotten all his apt sayings about Honor and Chivalry; near him the Ensign, whose pale face, paler in fact than ever, indicated a night of anxious thought, and then our friend the Planter, who although the hour was early, and he had not yet broken his fast, still pressed a cigar between his lips, and hid his face in a curtain of smoke.

The Colonel and the challenged man alone were absent. As for the Colonel, he was in the next room, attending to his letters. and — perchance — to his last will and testament.

The first ray of sunrise shot through the window and trembled upon the vacant table.

As if that beam, breaking in upon the gloom, had unloosened their hearts and tongues, the gentlemen began to whisper with each other. One spoke of the sad and fatal necessity of Murder involved in the Code of Honor — another of the widows and orphans who had been made by that *blessed* code — a third of the efficacy of a sword thrust, in healing broken hearts, or of the short and easy method of patching up "self-respect" by a — pistol shot.

Some spoke of the character of the young Colonel, who, but twenty-two years old, might be cold and stiff before an hour was gone.

And others of his antagonist — of the virtues which bound him to the hearts of many dear friends — of the ties which held him fast to life. Before an hour, very possibly, that antagonist would be a — corpse.

Our friend, the bluff Captain closed all argument by the emphatic — "The Colonel's been struck and he must fight!" The Planter said nothing, but smoked his cigar; maybe he was thinking of his home, and calling to mind the Mother who might hear of the Colonel's death, ere the day was two hours older.

As for the Ensign, he had nothing to say. It was his part to see that the weapons of murder were fairly prepared, and that the murder itself was done according to rule. That was all he had to do with the matter. And he waited for the hour of the performance with commendable impatience.

At last the Ensign pulled out his watch, and announced the hour of — "SEVEN!"

There was a general movement, and at the same moment the two doors of the chamber were suddenly opened.

Through the door opening into the hall. came a very tall, slim gentleman with a pistol-case under his arm.

"The second of Mr. Payne!" burst from twenty tongues

And this tall slim gentleman, with the pistol-case under his arm, was followed by a gentleman whose short and stout form — well knit withal — and not unpleasing features, indicated the antagonist of the Colonel, Mr. Payne himself, who yesterday levelled the popular favorite in the dust.

The second bowed and laid his pistol-case on the table; Mr. Payne bowed and folded his arms. His courage was unquestioned, but his face was impressed with an expression of seriousness — maybe — gloom.

"The Colonel is good with the rifle, good with the pistol, good with the small sword!" So the whisper ran round the room.

"And he'll wing his man," rather rudely whispered the Captain.

The Ensign rose, bowed twice, once to Mr. Payne, then to the second, and then in low tones, began to confer with the second upon the arms to be used, and the form to be observed in the approaching duel. Their whispers alone broke the breathless stillness. With rifle or with sword, or with pistol? Here in this room, or in the open air? Shall a fallen 'kerchief be the signal for them to begin? How many thrusts, how many shots, how much blood before "satisfaction" is given?

Such was the hurried conversation of the "seconds," conducted in animated whispers, now with a bow and again with a smile. The politest man in the world is the "second" of a duel.

Meanwhile Mr. Payne stood alone — his arms folded — his eyes now fixed on the mantel-piece, now wandering to the window. Perchance he felt that his position was rather awkward; or thought how cheerful the sunshine looked, and how gloomy it would seem, if in an hour or more, those beams would light up the cold face of a corpse — or the cold faces of two corpses.

Mr. Payne awaited with great impatience for the end of the second's conversation, and for the coming of — his antagonist.

We have forgotten the opening of the other door. Through that door the Colonel came, at the very moment that Mr. Payne and his friend strode through the other. He remained for a moment concealed by the shadow of the bed, and then stepped suddenly into view, before the very eyes of Mr. Payne.

That gentleman started back with involuntary surprise, as he caught first, a glimpse of his antagonist's shadow, and then a full view of that antagonist himself.

A murmur swelled through the apartment, at the contrast presented by the personal appearance of Mr. Payne, as compared with the tall and imposing figure of the Virginia Colonel. Not that Mr. Payne was at all an unhandsome man, nor that his firm features lack expression, but the Colonel was a man whom you would remark not only for the majesty of his stature, but for the expression of his face, among a crowd of ten thousand men.

And a burning blush overspread Mr. Payne's face, as he saw his antagonist standing before him, looking into his face — wearing the very uniform which he had worn yesterday — bearing upon his brow the livid scar of that fatal insult.

But Mr. Payne had no time for thought.

"*We have arranged the preliminaries,*" exclaimed the seconds, turning suddenly round, and starting with surprise as they beheld their principals standing face to face.

Again Mr. Payne blushed as he saw the eye of the Colonel fixed upon him, and then folding his arms, he knit his brow and gazed sternly into his antagonist's face.

The gentlemen present rose with one movement. You might have heard the beating of your own heart, all was so breathlessly still. Not a spectator but anticipated a personal conflict.

"Mr. Payne," the Colonel began.

Mr. Payne retreated a step, still folding his arms.

"Yesterday I called you 'Liar!'"

"You *did*," cried Payne, with a flush of anger. "And —"

"You levelled me to the ground," continued the Colonel. "Behold the mark of your blow!"

He paused — the silence deepened. The Colonel's voice and look were calm, but firm; Payne's face was flushed; his eye indignant.

"And now, sir, I have a word to say to you," continued the Colonel, still calm and firm. "And first let me ask a question. Is it manly — is it Christian, to attempt to justify a wrong by a murder? Or, is it more generous, more just, to confess a wrong with

DEATH OF BRADDOCK.

frankness, and solicit forgiveness from the injured? Yesterday I applied an unjust and ungentlemanly epithet to you — you promptly avenged yourself — are you satisfied? Here's my hand — let us be friends!"

Long before the words had passed from the Colonel's mouth — long before the spectators recovered from their stupefaction — Payne had flung both hands toward his antagonist. The tears were streaming from his eyes.

The seconds recoiled — the audience had no speech; they could only stand and look.

Then the Colonel, with the mark on his forehead, led Mr. Payne toward the table. A decanter stood there, with two glasses.

"Gentlemen," said the Colonel, filling a glass and handing it to Payne, and then raising one to his own lips —"I give you the health of my good friend, Mr. Payne."

They emptied their glasses with one impulse.

"And now, gentlemen, allow me to hope, that when, in after time, you recall the various personal combats which you have witnessed, you will remember with something like admiration the Duel of Mr. Payne and his enemy, George Washington!"

Was there one man in that assemblage who could have called young Washington, Coward?

And it was because he had "*courage enough to bear the name of Coward*," that he became the man of counsel and of Battle — the Deliverer of a Country — the President of a free People — his name the watchword of all time.

For a moment let us glance upon a far different scene, which took place after the Revolution.

There is the blush of dawn upon the Hudson. In a glade, shaded by rocks overgrown with vines, and canopied by a glimpse of blue sky, two men stand ready for the Duel.

In other words, they have come here, in the silence of the morning time, to do Murder, in accordance with the rules of Honor.

Both of the same age — the very prime of mature manhood — renowned alike in the history of their country — they stand apart, while the "seconds" load the pistols and measure the ground.

One attracts your attention with his great forehead, indented between the brows, and swelling with the sublime proportions of a great soul.

That is Alexander Hamilton.

The other wins your gaze, not only by his forehead, but by the indescribable, almost supernatural *fascination* of his eyes.

That is Aaron Burr.

They have been together in the Revolution, in the tent of Washington,— amid the perils of battle, — among the wintry hills of Valley Forge.

Both great intellects, renowned alike for eloquence and courage; they have come here, to steal side-long glances at each other for a little while — and then stand back to back, and, at a word, wheel and murder.

Burr challenges Hamilton, but Hamilton, unlike Washington, has not the "*Courage to bear the name of Coward.*" Hamilton, convinced, as any man in his senses must be, that the law of Duel is simply a law of Murder, accepts the challenge, and flings his life away like Abner of old.

Gaze upon the cold face of Alexander Hamilton — behold Aaron Burr shrink shudderingly away from the corpse — and then contrast the conduct of Hamilton and Burr, the one *accepting* the challenge *tendered* by the other — with the sublime courage of Washington —"a Courage which was not afraid of the name of Coward."

LEGEND SEVENTH.

THE HUNTER OF THE ALLEGHANIES.

Ninety-three years ago — from the ninth of July, 1848 — a man of almost giant stature, clad in the garb of a hunter, emerged from the shadows of a western forest, and stood in the sunlight, upon the summit of a rock, which overhung the waves of a wood-embosomed river.

It was a calm day in summer. There was no cloud in the sky; no shadow on the waves. The air whispered in subdued murmurs through the leaves of the colossal trees, and the river, flashing in the sun, rolled through the solitude with wild flowers scattered upon its bosom.

And the hunter, a man of gaunt form, and sunburnt face, seamed with scars, rested his arms upon his rifle, and surveyed the scene with a quiet delight. Standing thus alone, amid the silence and verdure of the green forest, he looked like an impersonation of those rugged pioneers of the white race, who combine the craft of civilization, with the costume and manners of the red men.

The scene was marked by peculiar features. Gazing up the river, the hunter beheld on one side the sombre verdure of a trackless forest, advancing to the very brink of the waters; on the other a level plain — bordered by woods — succeeded by a sloping hill, with depth of woods beyond, rising boldly into the summer sky.

There were dismal ravines among those woods — paths of difficulty and danger, beside that river; and the hunter clutched his rifle, while a grim smile crossed his scarred features as the thought of his Indian foes flashed over his brain.

Still, clad in his garb of skins, with a hunting shirt worn over all, and girt by a leathern belt to his waist, this man of the wilderness, whose delight it was to track the wild beast to its lair, or follow the Indian on his way of death, leaned upon his rifle, while his sunken eyes began to flash and brighten in his sunburnt face.

It was high noon.

The silence of the wilderness was unbroken by a sound.

Here waved the forest leaves, gorgeous with the drapery of summer; there flashed the river, bearing stray flowers upon its tremulous bosom; yonder, on the northern shore, extended the plain, with the hill rising gently toward the distant wood.

In fact, the river and the plain, and sloping hill, embosomed among woods, smiled in the noonday sun, without one floating cloud to shadow their beauty, or dim the tranquil azure of the summer sky.

While the hunter stood on the projecting rock, drinking the silence and the fragrance of the untrodden wild, a change came suddenly over the scene. The blast of a war trumpet was borne upon the air; a war banner fluttered in glimpses on the sight.

That trumpet was the voice of an army; that banner waved over the heads of twelve hundred men in battle array.

It was a very beautiful sight to see, as emerging from the shadows, they came along the southern bank of the river, with the great forest on one hand, and the river, rolling and flashing on the other. Banners were waving there, and drum answered to trumpet, as they came, and the tread of twelve hundred men awoke the echoes of the woody glen.

There were British soldiers with their scarlet coats glaring, and their burnished arms flashing in the sun; there was the pride of the Virginian chivalry, clad in huntsman attire;

and there, riding leisurely along, upon a snow-white steed, came the general of the host, upon whose word hung twelve hundred lives.

He was a man of commanding presence, with a golden-hilted sword by his side, and a laced chapeau upon his forehead. A scarlet coat, adorned with gold lace, displayed the strength and elegance of his warrior form; his florid face, stamped with an abiding complacency, was ruffled with a smile.

Around him rode a band of gallant men, the officers of his staff, arrayed, like their General, in scarlet and tinsel.

Only one in that band was attired in different costume; only one did not mingle in the laughter, or take part in the careless conversation.

He was a youth of twenty-three years, and his pale cheek bore traces of sickness. Over his blue uniform a hunting shirt was thrown, but it did not conceal the noble outline of his tall form, nor altogether hide the proportions of his manly chest. Mounted upon a dark bay horse, he rode forward in silence, his grey eyes flashing from his pale face with steady light.

On this side the woods — yonder the river — around him the glitter of tinsel and the waving of plumes, and the youth of twenty-three years laid one hand absently upon the flowing mane of his steed, while the other rested upon the hilt of his sword. His thoughts were far away — his absent eye and pale cheek contrasted strongly with the laughing faces which encircled him.

The General and his Staff were thinking gay thoughts and talking pleasant words in that quiet summer hour.

The youth of twenty-three was the only silent one in the band. Unsheathing his gold-hilted sword, the General pointed to the opposite shore, where the level plain, embosomed among woods, rose into a gently sloping hill, backed by a sombre forest and a smiling sky:

"Before sunset, Fort Duquesne is ours," he said, with a smile. "Our men will cross the river at this ford, ascend yonder hill, and traverse ten miles of forest road, which lie between us and the fort, ere the setting of the sun. The banner of his Majesty will wave over the conquered fort before the day is gone."

The gallant men who rode near their General chorussed his words, and amid the tramp of that legion of armed men, the roll of drum and the peal of trumpet, you might have heard their exclamations —

"Before sunset, the flag will wave over the conquered fort!"

The youth of twenty-three did not mingle in the chorus. He cast his glance toward the opposite shore — toward those magnificent woods, whose depths embosomed dismal ravines — toward the far-off hill-top, which was separated from Fort Duquesne by a wilderness of ten miles; and his lip was compressed, his cheek grew paler, his eye gathered new fire.

Only the night before he had started from the sick couch and mounted his war horse. Perchance the fever still lingered in his veins; but his face was shrouded in sadness — his heart was shadowed by a vague but overwhelming foreboding.

The General turned to him with a laugh —

"Colonel, you are gloomy to-day," he said. "But then you have just risen from a sick couch, and the road is rough and fatiguing. In a little while, however, the danger and the peril will be over. To-night we will sleep in Fort Duquesne, and drink a bumper to the health of our King."

The young man urged his horse nearer to the General's side.

"General," he said, bending toward him, and speaking in a whisper, "there are dangerous coverts on yonder shore — fatal ravines in the depths of yonder woods. Let me take a band of picked men, and beat the covert and explore the ravines, before the whole body of our men cross the river."

There was an inexpressible earnestness in his voice — a steady light in his grey eye.

The General uttered an ejaculation of impatience:

"There is no danger," he exclaimed, assuming all the dignity of a General in the regular service. "To-night we will sleep in Fort Duquesne."

The young man did not reply; and while the bugle answered to the drum, and the solemn grandeur of the forest was contrasted by the flashing of the waters, General Brad-

dock and Colonel Washington rode side by side on the border of the Monongahela.

Twelve hundred men, some clad in scarlet, others in blue — some lifting their glittering bayonets into light — others girding their tried rifles in sinewy arms, were marching there, with their General in their midst, and the sad eye of George Washington glancing from line to line.

And the same breeze which fanned the pale cheek of the young soldier, lifted the great banner of England into light, and tossed its gay emblazonry over plumes and bayonets of the armed men.

It was a sight, mingling grandeur and beauty, to see these soldiers emerge from the solemn shadows, and take their way along the river's verge; but as the glittering array, parting into three divisions, prepared to ford the river, while the bugles rang with merrier peals, the scene assumed a deeper interest, a stranger and wilder grandeur.

Braddock, reining his white horse near the shore, saw the first division, of three hundred men, march into the waves in exact order, while the banner fluttered in their van. The face of the brave General was clad in smiles; his voice, heard in repeated commands, was gay and boisterous.

And as the bayonets of the first division glittered near the northern shore, the second division, two hundred strong, left the southern shore, with the roll of drum and the clang of trumpet. Beautiful it was to see their burnished arms, reflecting the blaze of noonday, and firing the tremulous waves with masses of dazzling light.

And as the General saw the first division ascend the opposite bank, the second fording the river; he himself led on the third, — the main body of his brave army, — and while his white horse bent down to slake his thirst in the cool waves, he beheld the artillery and the baggage train, slowly urging onward, while the thoughtful young soldier, rode in silence at his side.

There was no smile upon the face of young Washington. True, the sky was smiling beyond the opposite woods, but dismal ravines were hidden beneath those groups of foliage; deathly coverts lurked beneath those bowers of summer verdure.

And yet it was a magnificent thing to see this brave band parting into three divisions — one flashing on yonder plain, the second emerging from the waves, and the third toiling, on in mid-stream — while from each division trumpet answered trumpet, and the clattering of arms, the tread of regular columns, the neighing of war steeds, gave omen of a day of glory, to be followed by a night of victorious repose.

The grim hunter who stood upon the rocks beheld it all. Saw the first division ascend the hill, the second emerge upon the opposite shore, and the third in the midst of the waters, and then the animated face of Braddock, side by side with the pale visage of Washington, for a moment enchained his gaze.

He left the tree which had sheltered him; he descended from the rock, and drew near the shore. A solitary soldier, whose red coat shamed the hunter's grim array, lingered there, the last to cross the river, the last man of the army. His foot was in the water, when the hand of the hunter pressed his shoulder.

"Drink, man, drink, from the river, before you cross," cried the hunter to the astonished soldier, "For there's a warm day before you, and your next draught will be of blood."

And while the soldier, startled at the appearance of the gaunt backwoodsman, shrunk from his touch, the hunter clasped his rifle more firmly in his knotted fingers, and dashed through the river's waves.

We will see him again, when the fight goes on most horribly under its pall of cloud; the rifle which he grasps is the fate of yonder gallant army.

Meanwhile, Braddock, passing from the river to the shore, — his eye drinking in, with one quick glance, the blue sky, the encircling woods, and the hillside clad in scarlet and steel, — Braddock we say, the General of the army, who had been trained to war on the parade ground of Hyde Park, turned with a smile to the young Virginian who rode near his side.

"The sky is clear, Colonel, — to-night we sleep in Fort Duquesne!"

LEGEND EIGHTH.

THE BATTLE OF MONONGAHELA.

"General," said young Washington, with an earnestness in his tone that would have penetrated any heart, not stultified by self-conceit, "with twelve men, I will traverse yonder thickets, and defend our army from a fatal surprise."

The young soldier as he spoke bent over the neck of his bay steed, and his pale face, shadowed in the forehead by his hat, was touched in the cheeks by the noon-day sun.

Braddock smiled —

And at the moment, a column of smoke, rose from the hill-side into the sky — there was a sound as of one column of armed men recoiling on another — from every side pealed the rifle-shot mingled with that war-cry which makes the blood sun cold even in a veteran's veins.

The smile passed from Braddock's face.

Casting his gaze toward the hill-top, he beheld his first division half lost to view amid clouds and flame. He saw a sheeted blaze pouring from the shadows of the trees. He heard the cry which pealed from the wood, from the ravine — echoing, thrilling, from every side into the calm Heaven.

"The Indians and the French are upon us!" he cried, turning his flushed face toward young Washington.

At the same moment, the white plume which crowned his chapeau was borne away by a rifle shot.

"General," cried Washington, "there is but one way to save our army from defeat and massacre. Let our men fight under shelter, and then every rock will be a fort, every tree a castle — "

With a sneer on his colorless lip, the General turned away.

"That is not the way for an Englishman to fight," he said.

But as he spoke, the first division came rushing in wild disorder from the top of the hill — soon its panic-stricken soldiers communicated their panic to the second — and from the second to the third, like lightning from one cloud to another, that panic leapt, until amid the clouds which rushed over the scene, nothing was seen but broken ranks, falling back before a deadly fire.

How the voice of the battle awoke the wilderness, and filled every nook of the forest with the groans of dying men! Dying afar from country and from home, not in open fight, or by a foe, whose eyes flashed in their faces as his arm fell in the death-blow, but by the hand of an enemy who crouched in the thicket, and murdered securely from the shadow of a rock.

Behold the scene. This band of twelve hundred men, scattered over the hill-side, are shut in by a wall of fire. They advance and they are dead. They retreat, and their path is choked by corpses, which a moment since were living men. They move to his side, and death flashes upon them from yonder log On to the other, and they are mown to pieces by the fire from those collosal oaks.

And Braddock, hoarse with shouting and blind with rage, sends the gallant men of his staff whirling over the field.

"Let them form in regular order. Let them fight like Englishmen, and the day is ours."

And to his side there comes a wounded horse, bearing the young Virginian, whose hunting shirt, is torn into ribbons by the bullets of the foe.

"General," he cries, "it is not yet too late. Let our men fight the enemy in their own way

— let them fight behind cover — and the day is ours."

The words have not passed his lips, when his horse reels under him, and sprinkles the sod with blood. Then young Washington starting from his dying horse, springs to his feet, and awaits the answer of Braddock, his pale face now flushing fast with the fever of battle.

An oath escapes the lips of the Briton.

"No, sir. The men shall fight as Englishmen or not at all!" he shouts, and dashes to another part of the field.

Half-way down the hill-side, encircled by the sudden clouds of battle, the young Virginian stood, one foot resting upon the flank of his dying steed, whose glassy eye was once upturned toward his master's face, and then cold and dark forever.

His cheek was no longer pale — flushed with the impulse of the fight, it gave a deeper light to his eye, while his brow grew radiant with a sombre delight.

It was in this moment, when the fire of the irresistible foe, hurled panic and death into the "exact" order of the British army, that young Washington lingered for a moment near his dead steed, and took in with an eager glance the confused details of the scene.

Clouds of white smoke, tinged here and there with a midnight fold, rolled over the hill-side, and hung over the river, reaching from forest to forest, above the waters, like a bridge of death.

Among these clouds, through the intervals made by the musquet flash or rifle blaze, the British host, no longer joined in compact lines, but broken into confused crowds, was visible. From the hill-top and from the ravines on either hand; nay, from every log and tree streamed the incessant blaze which strewed the sod with dead and dying. And the calm sky was choked by battle cloud — the awful stillness of the virgin forest was succeeded by the howl of demoniac carnage.

This was the scene which Washington beheld as resting one foot upon the flank of his dead horse, he cast a hurried glance around him.

Braddock was there — upon his horse, which panted and reared among heaps of dead — his voice came hoarsely down the hill as he endeavored to rally his men into parade order, and force them to fight this battle in "*regular*" style.

Washington groaned in anguish. He had warned the General of the ambush — had besought him, almost with tears, to move forward with caution — and now, his warnings disregarded, his prayers met with scorn, he beheld twelve hundred men at the mercy of a hidden foe.

"The day is not yet lost!" he cried, as a hope brightened over his face.

"George!" said a gruff voice, and a hard hand was laid upon his own.

The giant hunter,* clad in his costume of skins, half concealed by a hunting shirt, stood before him. The blood trickled over his sunburnt cheek, but he grasped his good rifle in one hand, while the other held the rein of a frightened and riderless horse.

"George," said the hunter, with gruff familiarity, "thou'rt the only man can save us today. Here's a horse, boy — mount him, and tell that fool of a Britisher, that we don't fight French and Ingins in this 'ere style. Tell him that we can fight 'em in their own way, but it is not our fashion to walk up to death and swallow it, in this fool-hardy manner."

Not a word more was spoken. With a bound Washington sprang into the saddle — you may see his form, yonder amid the mists of battle — you may trace the fiery circles of his sword above the lurid clouds.

The hunter gazed after him with a grim smile, and then plunged into the smoke.

Near the top of the hill, his face purpled by rage, Braddock mounted on a fresh horse — two had fallen under him — was hurrying his aids over the field, while the bullets whistled like hail over his head, and about the long mane of his war steed.

"General!" cried Washington, as he dashed up to the side of the Briton — "once more let me beseech you — change the order of this conflict. It is folly, it is worse than folly, to attempt to combat a hidden enemy in this style. Let the Provincials, at least, fight behind cover" ——

In the very earnestness of the very moment he leaned forward, his hunting shirt falling

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* See Legend Seventh.

back over his chest, and disclosing his blue uniform. And at the very instant a button was severed from his breast by a rifle ball.

Braddock did not even listen to the young Virginian. Maddened by the terrible havoc going on every hand — inflated by the peculiar self-complacency which possesses mere military men, over all the world, he bade his aid-de-camp join with him in the attempt to rally the panic-stricken troops, to display them once more in regular lines, and march them "exactly" to death, according to the tactics of the regular army.

But at the moment a scene occurred which paled even Braddock's cheek.

A band of Virginians, some eighty men in all, fought their way up the hill-side, turned a fallen tree, whose huge trunk, some five feet in diameter, offered a convenient breast-work. From the thicket, beyond that tree, streamed the blaze of Indian rifles, and yet those men, led on by their Captain, the brave Waggoner, fought steadily up the hill-side, their blue hunting frocks seen distinctly amid the clouds which curled about the summit.

Their way is littered with dead ; they cannot advance but the corpse of a Briton, clad in scarlet, glares in their faces with stony eyes.

Braddock saw them on their fearful way — Washington, too, reining his brown steed near the General's side, held his breath as he marked each step of their progress.

The short sword of Waggoner gleaming in their van — the heroic Virginians dashed onward, and, leaving three of their number in their path, they reach the fallen tree — they are dealing death among the foemen hidden by yonder thicket, when —

Braddock's cheek grew livid — Washington uttered a cry of despair!

— When they are cut down, hewn into fragments, crushed into one mangled heap of living men, entangled among dead and dying. Crushed not by a fire from their front, but by a fire from the rear, mangled not by bullets of the foe, but by the rifles of their comrades — their brothers.

Captain Waggoner rose up from among the heaps of dead, and shook his bloody knife in the air, in witness of the fatal mismanagement which had butchered thirty out of his eighty men.

Washington saw that sword quivering and gleaming from the hill-top, and with a cold sneer on his face, turned to the regular general.

"You see, General," he said, "those of our men who mean to fight, are massacred by your regular soldiers!"

Ere Braddock could reply, his horse sunk beneath him, pierced in the heart by a rifle bullet. He rises from the dying steed — he shouts for a fresh horse — he plunges madly to and fro in the thickest of the battle. Does he learn wisdom by experience, does he bid his men to maintain the fight behind the trunks of these colossal trees? No — no! Determined to enforce "regular tactics" and "correct discipline" to the last moment, he speeds wildly among his broken columns, never for a moment pausing in his career, save to insult some provincial band, who are holding battle from the shelter of fallen trees.

There was a slender youth, clad in the hunting frock, who loaded his rifle behind a poplar tree which towered alone in the centre of the field. His young breast protected by this tree, he loaded in silence without even a battle shout, and then, with lips compressed and flashing eye, took his deadly aim, and saw his distant foeman reel into death.

It was Braddock who marked this youth, and reined his horse near the tree, pulling the rein so suddenly, that the wild steed fell back on his haunches.

"Coward!" cried he, turning his flushed face towards the boy, "you dare not fight like a man, but must skulk behind the shelter of a tree ——"

He leans over the neck of his steed; his sword descends — the boy sinks on his knees, and turns his disfigured face toward the British General.

But Braddock was gone again. Urging his horse over the dying and the dead, he hurries to another part of the field, beholding everywhere the same spectacle — broken crowds of scarlet-coated soldiers, firing upon each other while the hidden foe hems them on every hand, and mows them incessantly into the great harvest of death.

Meanwhile, the boy by the solitary poplar, beaten to the earth by Braddock's sword, wipes the blood from his eyes, and looks around with a vague glance. His senses are

whirling in delirium ; a word of home comes to his white lip, mingled with the syllables of a sister's name.

But there is a giant form bending over him ; a sunburnt face, streaked with blood, is gazing into his own with dilating eyes. It is the hunter, clad in a hunting shirt, spotted with blood, but with his good rifle in his brawny arm.

His own arm becomes nerveless, his harsh voice faint and broken, as he bends over the bleeding boy.

"Arthur," he says, smoothing the brown locks of the boy aside from his bloody forehead — "who has done this ? Tell me, child — tell me ;" — an oath escaped from between his set teeth — "and if he's hidden behind a hundred yards of French and Ingins I'll pay him for it, afore this day's an hour older !"

The boy passed one hand over his eyes, and wiped the blood away.

"Brother," he faintly said, and a smile of recognition passed his pale face — "It was a sword * * * * In Braddock's hand. * *. * * You see, he did not like it, because I fought behind a tree."

The stern backwoodsman rose and clutched his rifle. The cords of his bared neck began to swell ; a hoarse cry came from his heaving chest.

And then, while his young brother lay bleeding at the foot of the poplar tree, the sunburnt man, with the great tears starting over his tawny cheeks, began to load his rifle in silence, but with much prudence and care.

"That ball is for *him*, Arthur — I shan't fire this rifle until *his* heart lies afore it, and that's a sartin thing !"

With these words he turned away, measuring the sod with immense strides. He had not gone ten paces, when a sudden thought came over him.

"The boy will die," he muttered, and turned away.

He drew near, but no voice greeted him this time with the word "brother." Where he had left a wounded form, bathed on the brow with streaming blood, now was only a corpse, propped against the tree, the rifle fallen from its stiffened fingers, and the cold lips parting in a smile.

There was a stain upon his breast, near the heart — a stray bullet had completed the work begun by Braddock's sword.

It would have moved your heart to see the rugged backwoodsman, gazing silently into the face of the dead boy. Few words he said, but they were spoken with a heaving heart and choking utterance.

"Arthur, my child, you staid at home with the old folks in the settlements yonder, while your brother went out to seek his fortin' among b'ars and Ingins in the woods. A bold fellow I've been — many a rough fight I've had — but I don't want to see *two days* like this in a life time. This mornin', when I came to jine the army, I thought you was far away — safe at home — it's the first time I've seen your face for many a day. An' now they're waitin' for you, — father and mother, — and here you are, cut down like a dog, by Braddock's sword."

A gleam of battle light reddened the pale features of the dead boy.

The giant hunter turned away, grasping the rifle which embodied the fate of the army, the destiny of Braddock. He turned away, and soon was lost among the clouds — after a while we will behold him again.

For three hours the work of massacre went on. Five horses were shot beneath the British General as he hurried madly over the field, but all his efforts were vain. His artillery and infantry, mingled at first in sad disorder, were soon mingled in one common havoc. For three hours the blood shed on the hill-side trickled down through the grass, and fell drop by drop into the Monongahela. For three hours that girdle of flame shut in the doomed army, and when the third hour came, and the sun, as if weary of slaughter, veiled his beams in a lurid cloud, seven hundred men were stretched upon the sod.

Seven hundred dead and dying, out of an army of twelve hundred men, slain in a combat of three hours, by a hidden foe!

Sixty officers, brave and gallant ; the flower of Virginian chivalry and the pride of the regular army, were stretched among the slain.

And as the work of carnage goes on, where is Washington, the youth of twenty-three, whose grey eye, already fires with precocious experience?

Many and thrilling are the traditions which

the old soldiers of the field — the few survivors of its carnage — have handed from the history of their hearts down to our day.

Mounted on a dark bay he had crossed the river, his pale cheek touched by a solitary flush, but his grey eyes full of indefinable foreboding.

The bay horse had fallen dead beneath him in the dawn of the fight.

Next, his commanding form, roused into all its vigor by the frenzy of battle, was borne over the field by a generous roan horse, whose eye dilated with the fury of the hour.

And the generous roan had fallen, too, under his young rider, howling his last war cry as his broken limbs crumbled beneath him.

But now, mounted upon a grey horse, his forehead bared to the battle flash, and his uniform riddled by bullet-holes, Washington is seen where the fire of the enemy illumines the verge of the ravine; where the Indian yell mocks the anguish of the dying — where the hill-top gleams like a funeral pyre, with bayonets and rifle blaze.

Now confronting this havoc-stricken band of regulars, hurling his horse before them, and daring them to fly the field; now rallying yonder group of Continentals, and leading them to the hopeless charge; at one time, beside the infuriated Braddock, listening to his mad commands, at another, whirling like an arrow over the hill side, into the very vortex of battle.

It was thus that the grey horse became known to friend and foe; it was amid the corses of Braddock's field beside the waters of the Monongahela, that the name of Washington was first stamped upon the hearts of his countrymen, to ripen into full glory upon a broader and holier field.

And wherever the young Virginian went, whether skirting the borders of the wood, or riding in the centre of the fight, there was an eye that followed his career; there was a rifle levelled at his breast.

So, Braddock, wherever he rode, saw through the mists of the scene, an eye watching his progress, a rifle levelled at his heart.

There was this difference between the two. It was an Indian who tracked the steps of Washington, and hung like a red image of death in his path. Three times he had fired — he was the most fatal marksman in all his tribe — and yet his balls had glanced from the breast of Washington, like icicles from the granite rock.

It was a gaunt form, almost gigantic in stature, that followed Braddock through the mazes of the scene. A backwoodsman, with a torn hunting frock, fluttering over his garment of skins. But never once had he fired. Many times had the rifle rose, and the aim been taken, but there was no report from the deadly tube. He seemed, this unknown man, to delay his fire, as an epicure pauses long, before he touches the richest viand of his feast.

At last there come a moment — the bloodiest and the darkest of all — near the close of the third hour, when Washington reined his grey horse near Braddock's side. It was near the summit of the hill — they were encircled by corpses; wherever their eyes turned was the sight of a dying man, writhing in the last agony, or a dead man's face, upturned to the dark battle cloud.

Braddock's jet black horse — it was the sixth he had bestrode on this fatal day — hung his head over the neck of Washington's grey steed, as the riders conversed in hurried and subdued tones.

Braddock's gay uniform was sadly disfigured; his face, livid under the eyes, was stamped with a sullen despair.

Washington's visage, boldly marked against the dark cloud — the forehead bare and the eye gleaming — was radiant with a glorious hope.

"General, I can save the wreck of our force," he said, in a pleading tone. "Permit me to do it."

At this moment, from a log, some few paces behind the back of Washington, rose the image of a gaunt backwoodsman, with levelled rifle, and sunburnt face, compressed by a deadly resolve.

And from a rock, fifty yards from the back of Braddock, an Indian started into view, his rifle poised — his red plume waving over his visage — the death aim taken, and the finger on the trigger.

Does the backwoodsman level his rifle at the heart of Washington?

Does the Indian chief mean to slay the General in the gay scarlet uniform?

No — no! Ten times the Indian has fired at the heart of Washington; four bullets have touched but not wounded him; six have left him scatheless. If the eleventh does not kill, the Indian will fire no more, assured that the Great Spirit panoplies the youth of twenty-three years.

And as for the Backwoodsman, this is his first and last fire at the heart of Braddock. As he loaded that rifle near the body of the dead brother — he feels that its bullet is winged by death.

And thus, the Indian behind Braddock, the Backwoodsman at the back of Washington, each take their fatal aim in the last hour of the fatal fight.

"Permit me, General," said the tremulous voice of Washington, "permit me to save the the wreck of our gallant band?"

There was a lull in the storm. Suddenly, through the momentary stillness, two separate sounds, from opposite sides, pealed on the air like echo answering echo. Two rifle balls, winged by death, hissed on their way.

One tore a fragment from the breast of Washington's coat, but left the young hero scatheless.

Braddock smiled as he marked the trace of the bullet — and then fell on the neck of his horse with a low groan. A bullet had pierced his right arm, and buried itself in his heart.

And the Indian chief fled into the thicket, telling his red brothers how the Great Spirit guarded the breast of the young man, mounted on the grey horse — how steel could not wound, nor bullet harm him — his heart was as granite, his arm as iron, and his name destined for great deeds in some future day.

And the gaunt hunter went slowly to the foot of the poplar tree; and bent near the dead boy, and wiped the blood, still warm, from his cold features, saying, amid his anguish, two simple words —

"My Brother!"

And the young Virginian, mounted on the grey steed, rallied the wreck of the gallant army, and — while artillery and baggage were left, with the corpses of the slain, to the foe — saw them cross once more the river, whose waves now blushed as if in very shame for the carnage, and a rude tumbril rolled onward, bearing amid the broken columns the mangled form of Braddock, who, in the delirium of his wounds, kept ever repeating a single name — "Washington."

LEGEND NINTH.

WASHINGTON IN LOVE.

THERE is a Legend which should never be told, save in the calm of the summer twilight, when the drops of the shower yet sparkle on the leaves, and the setting sun shines out from the west, while the east displays a rainbow on its clouds. Then when the glory of the rainbow, set upon the eastern cloud, seems to call to the declining sun, shining in great splendor, from the clouds that hang above his rays — when there are drops like diamonds on every leaf — when the air is fragrance — and one heaven-like glimpse of sunset and rainbow, looks in upon the world, ere the storm and blackness of night comes over us — then let us tell a strange Legend of the wild wood, in the days of old.

And yet I am afraid to tell this Legend. It has lingered so long about my heart — been in my dreams so long — come to me like music that bursts over still waters through midnight stillness — that I am loth to write it down in words. Afraid that my pen cannot do justice to its simple pathos; that its joy and its tears, will find in my words no voice, worthy of their intensity and love.

One summer evening when the sun was low, an old man sat in front of his cabin door.

That cabin stood in a hollow or glen, which extended through the virgin forest from north to south, with a glimpse of blue sky at either extremity.

It was a one-storied fabric, built of huge logs, and hidden under the boughs of the great trees. The roof, the timbers, everything but the rugged door, was hidden by boughs and vines. So that rugged door looked not so much like the entrance of a cabin, as a mass of rough boards, set in branches and leaves.

Some gleams of fading sunlight came from the sky above — from either extremity of the glen — and spread a pool of light before the old man's door.

Shut out from the world, three hundred miles at least from white civilization, hidden in this nook of the Alleghanies, this old man sat on the side of a fallen log, and with light playing around him — while the other part of the glen was in shadow — he seemed thinking of other days, of his youth, or of the graves of his People.

It is no image of the imagination that I would paint to you. An actual old man, enduring, suffering — dying by inches — in the awful solitude of the forest, in the year 1754.

A tall frame, gaunt and grim with age, and looking like a skeleton, encased in hunting shirt, leggins, and mocassins. A withered face, browned by wind and sun, with the sinews of the bared throat as prominent as cords, and the wrinkled forehead contrasted with scanty flakes of snow-white hair. His limbs crossed, his large hands laid on his knees, the old man gazes into the shadows of the forest, and seems like the Pilgrim of the old story, who sat him down one day, and waited patiently until Death came by.

Upon the log which supports the old man, we behold a rifle, with stock of dark mahogany, and mountings of silver. It is much worn, indeed it has seen forty years of service.

For this aged man, now sitting alone in the forest, presents to us a stern embodiment of that wondrous race of men, who penetrated the great forest of Pennsylvania, at least one hundred years in advance of their race, and made the Indian mode of life their own, gathering food with their rifles, and sometimes feeling a great consciousness of God's Presence, even in the midnight of the wilderness.

But the hunter is old now, very old; ninety years are upon him with their snows.

The hand that once was strong, is now weak as any child's. The foot that once scaled the mountain, and trod without fear, the verge of dizzy chasms, now trembles in the little journey from the log to the cabin door.

And he will die alone in the wilderness!

From no wilderness of Red Brick, will his soul escape to his God. But gloriously from the dead solitudes of the wilderness, that soul will leave the shattered frame — cold and stiff upon the log — and wing its way through the virgin air to Eternity.

"Ninety years!" the old man murmurs — and is still again. It is a long time to contemplate; longer to feel like ice in your veins, and winter in your soul.

And from the cabin-door, there steals on tiptoe a form, which by its very contrast, made the old age of the Hunter more deeply venerable.

A young girl, clad in a coarse skirt which reaches to the knee, her limbs covered with leggings, her feet with mocassins.

And yet you never saw a form at once so lithe and so blooming in its outlines — you never heard a step so gentle and yet so active — you never saw a brown face like hers, illumined by so pure a soul, or shadowed by chesnut hair so rich and flowing!

She came behind the old man gently, and laid her hands upon his white hairs, and placed her smooth cheek against his withered face.

It was like an embodied dream.

The withered cheek beside the clear brown face of youth, the eyes dim with age, contrasted with eyes large, black and brilliant; while hair telling of ninety winters swept the chesnut curls which scarcely indicated nineteen summers.

It was a touching sight — to see the old man clasp her hands within his own, while his uplifted eyes, brightened into life again, as he perused the wild beauty of her face.

And as the evening hour deepened into night, they conversed together, the aged man, and the young maiden. Talked low and long of that strange life in the forest — of the books which cheered the lonely hours of the winter's night — of one Book which opened a path, even through the silence of eternal solitudes, from the lone heart to its God. Of the Hunters, rude men of the forest, who often came to the cabin door with stores of corn and venison — and now and then a garment or some luxury of civilized life — for the old Hunter and his grand-child, Marion.

"But grandfather, you have often promised to tell me of my father and mother," said the girl resting her hands upon his white hairs — and of the Home in which they dwelt, far away from the woods — near cities and gardens, such as we see described in books. I am but young, grandfather, — but you have passed many long years in the forest. Tell me, I beseech you, the story of your life, and of my own."

A shadow fell upon the old Hunter's face.

"Lo, Marion," he said abruptly — "there are histories my child, which should never be told, save as confessions, made by white lips in the hour of death. Your father — your mother!" he shuddered, and shrunk away from her hands and cast his eyes to the sod.

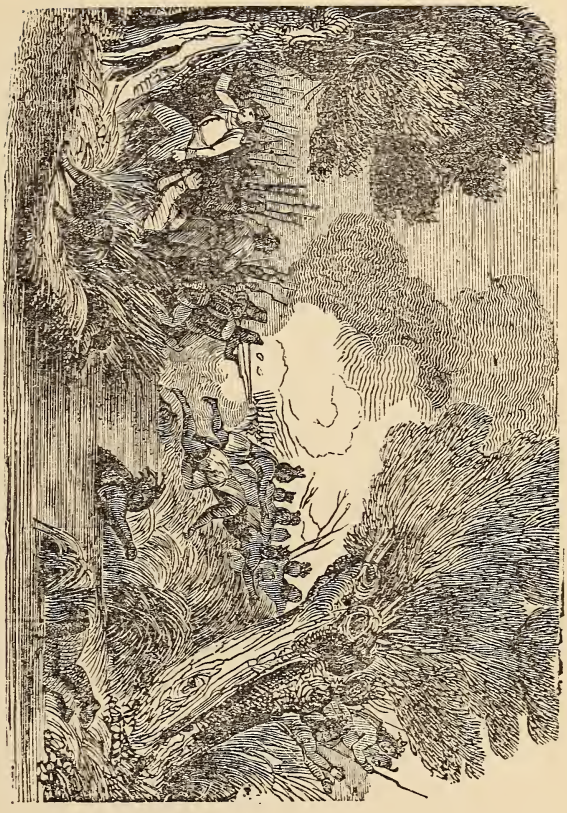
The girl stood silent and trembling, her bosom swelling beneath its coarse vestment; her large eyes full of light and tears.

The sunshine tinting the mazes of her chesnut hair, fell strong and vivid, upon his agitated face.

"You thrust me from you" — said Marion — "This is not well, grandfather. In all the world I have no friend but you."

He extended his withered hand.

"Come hither" — his voice was tremulous and broken — "sit by my side. Seventeen years ago, I came to this place, and bore you in my arms — a babe whose eyes had hardly seen one year of life. I reared this cabin for you Marion — to you, and to your life, I devoted what remained of mine own. By day I hunted among the hills, while you remained alone within our cabin. And at night, beside our fire, we sat together — you learned to read — the great world of books was opened to your eyes. And before my sight you blossomed into life, until the old Hunter, would look into your face at times, and wonder whether you were not an Angel, sent by God, to cheer the gloom of his cabin, and with your Presence lighten up the lone forest glen."



COMMENCEMENT OF BRADDOCK'S FIGHT.

The old man paused, and wiped the moisture from his eyes.

"Ask me of this — of your own history — of the blessing you have been to me, in my hours of pain — and I will speak freely. But rather wish me dead at your feet — rather pray that the lightning may strike these gray hairs — than to ask me to relate the History of the Past. The Past! That awful shadow which rests upon my history, ere I brought you to the glen, seventeen years ago!"

The old man rose abruptly, and with unsteady but hurried steps sought the cabin door. He disappeared beneath its shadow.

The girl remained near the fallen log, her finger placed upon her moist red lip, her eyes, burthened with tears, cast to the earth.

And while her bosom swelled with vague thoughts — thoughts strange and mingled in their hues — at once oppressive and lightened by gleams of joy — she strayed absently over the sward, toward the northern extremity of the glen.

A wondrous life had been hers. Reared in the lone forest, the Great World had come to her, only as the memories of a half-forgotten dream.

She had heard of a place, half a day's journey from the cabin, called Fort Duquesne; once, with her grandfather, she had visited "*a settlement*" far away in the woods, and seen for the first time in her life, the face of a white woman. Oftentime the red man had paused at the cabin door, but not with a thought of harm, for the old Hunter Abraham, dwelling thus alone, with this beautiful child — was sacred in his eyes — protected by the Great Spirit, who sends good angels to guard withered Age and brown-haired Orphanage.

Even the backwoodsman, who mingled the vices of civilization and the hardy virtues of savage life, respected the Home of the old man, and looked upon the beautiful Orphan as a sacred thing.

Thoughts and memories, like these, glided into the mind of Marion, as she wandered over the sward, toward the northern extremity of the glen.

At last, she started back with affright — for she advanced to the brow of a crag — one step farther — and she would have been dashed to pieces, in the abyss, which yawned below.

That crag, terminating the glade, commanded a wide horizon to the north and west.

A horizon of mountains, framing immense masses of forests, through whose depths of summer green, two winding rivers shone like liquid silver in the setting sun.

Marion looked below and shuddered. From the chasm beneath great trees arose, but a hundred feet of granite intervenes between their summit and the summit of the rock.

To the west she looked, and the flush of sunset, tinged her brown cheeks and chesnut hair, with light and rapture.

A blue canopy, with only one cloud — and that was in the path of sunset, unfolding its white breast, to the gaze of the dying Day.

But from afar — over the waste of woods, and near where the mingling rivers shone — came glimpses of a vision, which stirred the maiden's heart with awe and wonder.

Glimpses of armed men, whose burnished weapons, shone in the sunlight, like fire-flies through the gloom of night. Armed men, in ranks and columns, marching under banners, with horsemen riding in their midst. Now she saw them slowly ascend a hill, which rose suddenly from the forest — soon they were lost to sight — but at length came into view again, dotting the slope of a wide meadow, with points of dazzling light.

On the brow of the crag, clinging with one hand to a sapling, whose leaves swept her dark hair, while the other shrouded her eyes from the sun, the Maiden stood gazing with indefinable wonder, on the march of the unknown army.

Not until the sun went down, and darkness wrapt the landscape, and the chill mist, wandered a like ghostly form, through the glen, and before the cabin door, did the forest girl retreat from the verge of the crag.

Within the cabin, a pine-torch, inserted in a crevice of the logs, above the hearth, flung a ruddy light.

The cabin was but one spacious room, with two couches, of deer-skin, standing in opposite corners — walls of log — rudely constructed hearth — and floor as rude, sprinkled with pine branches and fragrant moss.

Their evening meal was past, and a slight fire burned on the hearth, for the atmosphere

of the night — although it was a mid-summer night — was damp and chill.

The old man was seated on his bench, leaning his elbows on his knees, and resting his cheeks in his hands; his grand-child stood near a shelf, her lifted hand grasping a book, and her face turned over her shoulder, towards his motionless form.

The light played in flashes over the moss-covered floor, and tinted with radiance the dark logs which formed the cabin floor.

"But when I die," said the old man, as if thinking aloud — "And there are not many days left to me — when I die, what will become of — you?"

The girl was about to answer, when the door opened with a crash, and a harsh voice was heard —

"Why I'll take keer of *her*, old Abr'am. I promise you that! I think o' settlin' in these clearin's somewhere, and I'd jist like to have a little woman o' that shape and complexion, fur my cabin."

The old man knew the voice; the sound of its accents seemed to penetrate his blood. He started to his feet, and fell back again with a shudder.

The arm of the girl lifted to reach the book, was palsied in the action — her face, turned over her shoulder, grew deathly pale.

Meanwhile the intruder advanced to the centre of the floor, and stood in the glow of the hearth-side.

Picture to yourself, a form six feet and more in height, with long limbs, lean bony arms, narrow shoulders and shrunken chest, and a thin scraggy neck, supporting a small head, covered with masses of red hair. A face with harshly moulded features, small eyes deep sunken, prominent nose and bulging brow. A costume made of fragments of military uniform, and backwoodsman's attire — a short green coat laced with gold, breeches of deer-skin, boots of dark leather, a belt, powder-horn, and spurs. One hand resting on a rifle, the other grasping the hilt of a hunting knife.

Such was the intruder; a man notorious among white and red men — among British and French, as a dead shot and a reckless bravo. In the course of a few years he had been seen fighting on all sides; now at the head of a band of Indians; now in the ranks of the Provincial soldiers; and a year before, at the battle of the Great Meadows, he had been prominent among the French, who attacked the little band of young Washington.

His real name, tradition tells us, was Michael Burke; but the cognomen by which he was named among the Indians, effaced his proper designation. More in regard to his disposition and the color of his hair, than to any rule of natural philosophy — we presume — he was called simply —

"The Red Wolf!"

And it was this title shrieking from the lips of the girl, and murmured by the old man, which elicited a grim smile from the bravo himself.

As he stood gazing into the fire, old Abraham made a quick and stealthy sign to his grand-child. She saw and comprehended that brief gesture. It meant —

"Bring me my rifle!"

The rifle stood beneath the shelves on which her books were placed. She seized it, was darting forward, when the Red Wolf wheeled suddenly round, and interposed his ungainly form, between the girl and her grandfather.

"Ra-a-ly it makes me laugh!" he cried, devouring the beauty of that young face, with a coarse stare — "Why the gal's a-goin' to battle surely! Which way my purty robin, with that shootin' iron? You look so nice, and so bright about the eyes, that I think I must e'en have a kiss" —

He advanced — the girl, frightened and pale, sank back, still grasping the rifle.

"Marion!" the old man cried — "Do not let go the rifle. Remember — there is neither mercy nor humanity about this man. Keep the rifle girl, and — "

The old Hunter started to his feet, and stood behind the bravo, his features animated by an intensity of hatred and disgust.

"Oh, yer thar, are ye'!" — and the Red Wolf turned his head over his shoulder, and saluted the old man with a hideous grin — "I remember you last in the fight of the Great Meadows. I do. For I aimed at your top-knot no less than ten times. I did. In a minnit you and I — will have a talk together, but now —"

He turned toward the girl, uttering an oath.

The young maiden still leaned for support

against the wall, clutching the rifle with her hands, but between the bravo and the girl, there stood a young man in the garb of a Provincial soldier, whose remarkable free and commanding form, enchained at once the eyes of Marion — of Abraham — and "the Red Wolf."

And this young man, standing so calmly, between the bravo and the girl, his chapeau in one hand, a pistol in the other, simply exclaimed:

"You had better retire Michael. The soldiers are waiting for you at the foot of the glen. Go! And tell them to push on without delay — I will join them on the road."

And the Red Wolf, without a word, slunk to the cabin door and was gone.

No words can picture the surprise manifested on the faces of the old man and his child. With a simultaneous glance they remarked the costume and appearance of the stranger.

He was clad in a blue coat, trimmed with silver lace; he wore military boots, a belt, sword and pistols. His countenance, very pale, and marked by features at once regular, intellectual, and full of calm dignity, was lighted by large grey eyes.

"Why Abr'am don't you know me. Forgotten so soon! Only a year ago you fought by my side, in the battle of the Meadows — have I passed from your memory already?"

And the young man advanced and extended his hand — the old man grasped it warmly —

"Colonel!" he ejaculated, "Surely God has sent you hither!"

"I am on my way to join the main body of the army under Braddock. You know our destination — Fort Duquesne! Two weeks ago I was left with the rear, prostrated by a fever, from which I am only half recovered. A few moments since passing near your cabin, I was attracted by the sound of voices; I tied my horse before the door, and to my astonishment found the 'Red Wolf' here — "

"But will he not return?" gasped the old man — "Or plan some act of treachery — "

"No danger, Abr'am," returned the young man with a smile — "He is true to the side that pays best. Last year he was French — they paid best. Now he is *retained* by our General, as Guide, Spy, and so forth. He leads our rear division through the woods. He will be faithful so long as there is a purse before him, and a loaded pistol at his temple."

A harsh sound was heard — the young man turned, and for the first time seemed conscious of the presence of the forest girl. The rifle had fallen from her grasp. She leaned for support against the wall, her arms folded, and her cheek pale and red by turns.

"My grand-child!" said the old man, and he repeated the name of the young officer.

As the girl advanced, and took the proffered hand of the Colonel, and in her simple way bade him welcome to that forest home, he gazed upon her face — into her eyes — with a long and absent glance. A glance which mingled admiration and reverence. Admiration for a face and form so beautiful, reverence for a soul so chaste and pure, as that which lighted her large eyes.

And the girl gazed without shame upon the noble form and handsome face of the young officer, and when she spoke, her voice was low, musical, and full of delicate intonations, her language the speech of a pure and educated woman.

For a while the young man gazed in her face — long, intently — while the thought half escaped his lips —

"So beautiful, and in this forest, by the hearth of a dying old man!"

His reverie was broken by the old man's voice —

"Colonel you will stay with us to-night. You are not yet sufficiently strong to bear the fatigues of the march. You will remain — will you not, and pursue your way to-morrow?"

The young man gazed around the cabin with a smile —

"I am afraid the person of a rude soldier like myself, might inconvenience you. Thanks friend Abr'am for your kind offer, but I must be on my way to-night. There will be a battle before many days, and I would not, for any consideration, be absent from its danger and glory."

And while he spoke to the old man, his eyes were fixed upon the girl, his heart possessed by an overwhelming wonder —

"This beautiful maiden, dwelling in the wild forest, alone with a dying old man!

There is a mystery here. Last year I saw him at the battle; ah! I remember — he spoke of a grand-child then, who awaited his return home. And when he dies, she will be left alone! An Orphan — young — friendless — cast upon the mercy of the world!"

This Thought did not rise to his lips, but it absorbed his soul. The light of the torch disclosed a sight by no means without interest or beauty.

These young forms, the one embodying all that is pure in maidenhood — the other, the courage and thought of young manhood — while the old man, with withered frame and white hairs, looked like an image of old Time, gazing upon Youth and Hope.

"In an hour," said the Colonel, "I must be on my way —"

The old Hunter swept aside the hide of a buffalo, which hung along one side of the cabin. An aperture like a doorway was disclosed. Taking the pine knot in his hand, Abraham exclaimed —

"Come hither, my friend. Let me converse with you alone."

And followed by the young Colonel, he lead the way through the passage, into a large chamber, with high walls and lofty ceiling. The floor, the walls, the ceiling, were white as Parian marble. And as the old man stood beneath the lofty arch, and raised the glaring torch, its light fell upon the most beautiful flowers and fruit — all fashioned out of stone by the hand of nature — looking like the ghosts of dead lilies and roses.

The young officer stood motionless and wonder-stricken.

"Do not wonder," said old Abraham — "Our cabin is built on the side of a hill, and before the mouth of the Great Cavern, which pierces the womb of the mountain. Colonel I have brought you here, so that you may listen to the words of a dying man."

There was a solemnity, a sadness, in the old man's tone, which pierced the heart.

"I will listen," murmured the Colonel.

"In a few days — perchance — in a few hours, I will be dead. To you I will confide a secret which I never entrusted to living man. Listen to a fatal Revelation —"

And as the young officer sank upon a seat of stone, with that solemn Chapel of Nature all around him, the old man's voice broke the stillness, and awoke the echoes of the place.

For an hour, Marion, seated near the fire, awaited the re-appearance of Abraham and the young stranger. We will not picture her thoughts, but her large bright eye was forming air-castles among the coals which glared on the hearth; her bosom rose and fell; maybe a vision of the old man, dead, and his grand-child alone in the world, passed over her soul.

And even amid her waking dreams, she heard the tones of the old man, breaking low and murmuring from the Cavern Chapel.

The hour passed, the old man and the Colonel came forth from the Cavern Chapel, and Marion, looking up, saw that the face of the young man was very pale — that there were tears in his eyes.

"Good night, my friends —" his voice was hurried and broken — "Abraham I have promised, and will obey. When the Battle is over — if God spares my life — I will come this way on my return home, and attend to your last request."

He took the hand of Marion — pressed it warmly — gazed upon her with a look which filled her with wonder — then grasped the hand of the old Hunter, and passed rapidly to the door.

But even on the threshold he staggered and fell.

It is no fiction that we are writing; weakened by disease, worn down by fatigue — every faculty of his soul roused into action by the Revelation of the old man — the strength of the young soldier gave way at last, and like a dead man he fell to the floor.

When they raised him from the floor, the forest girl and the old man together, he was chilled and fevered by turns; his eye unnaturally bright and vacant, his cheek now pale as a shroud, and now fired as with a living flame.

And all the night long, extended upon the old man's couch, he struggled with the madness of fever, now telling them to bring his horse, so that he might ride to battle — now starting up with livid lips and glaring eyes, and shouting forth the words of the battle charge — and sinking at last into a half dreamy

slumber, with the name of "Marion!" on his lips.

And sometimes the young girl, watching by his couch — cooling his fevered brow with her hand — shuddered as she heard the words of the old man's "Revelation" on the tongue of the delirious soldier.

Morning came; still the sick man was racked by pain and tortured by delirium. And while the old man prayed by his bed, the young girl wandered forth and gathered certain plants, commended by the rude Indian's lore, and prepared a potion, which gave sleep — oblivion — to the young Virginian.

The day wore slowly away, and the horse of the soldier, tied to a tree and fed by the old man, neighed wildly, as if to arouse his master, and call him from his bed to the scenes of the battle.

Towards evening the sick man unclosed his eyes. Was it a Dream? — the beautiful form that hovered near his bed? A glimpse of sunlight stole through the opened door, and illumined the beautiful face of the Watcher — the sad, tender eyes, centred upon the pale brow of the soldier — the young face, blooming with youth, and shadowed by luxuriant chesnut hair.

For a long while the sick man did not speak. He feared to break the spell which held the beautiful Dream so near his bedside.

At last endeavouring to recall his wandering thoughts, he asked —

"How long have I been ill?"

The maiden started at the sound of his voice —

"Since last night," she answered, remarking with undisguised joy, the healthy brightness of the speaker's eye.

"It is then the Eighth of July —" he cried, with an accent of the deepest regret — "And I am here, when the army are winning laurels. Ah! the Spy has left my soldiers in ignorance of my visit to this place; they have gone on without me — they are now with Braddock. Abr'am my friend, I must away!"

The old man answered his call; while the girl stood apart, they conversed together.

He rose, and although still weak, discovered that he was strong enough to mount his horse. He hastily resumed his coat, his sword and pistols, and stood ready to depart.

"Farewell, Marion!" he said, extending his hand, "In my delirium I dreamed of a Good Angel, watching by my bed, and placing her hand upon my brow. It is a Dream no longer, for I am awake, and the Good Angel is still before me. Farewell! When the Battle is over and Fort Duquesne won, I will see you again."

He hastened to the door; his horse, a dark bay, stood pawing the earth, beneath an oaken tree.

He was in the saddle, his tall form, looking magnificent in the light of the setting sun; his cheek still pale, but his eye bright and flashing.

And the white-haired man stood near the stirrup, and at his back came the brown-haired girl, her large eyes raised to the warrior's face.

"How far is it to the confluence of the the Monongahela and the Yohiogeny? Braddock was to encamp there the night before he advanced upon Fort Duquesne."

The old Hunter gave him directions, in relation to a short path through the wilderness —

"You will reach it ere midnight, Colonel — God go with you," he said.

The soldier ere he put spur to his steed, bent over the saddle, and fixing his gaze upon the face of the maiden, lifted her hand to his lips.

"Farewell!" he said, and his steed bounded down the glen. The tall form of the rider rose between the gaze and the sky, flushed by the declining day.

The maiden stood near the white-haired man, following that warrior form with her eyes, until the horse and the rider went together into the shadows.

"He will return when the battle is over," said Marion, like one awakening from a dream.

That night, where the waters of the two rivers mingle, Braddock standing among the veterans of his host, pressed the young soldier by the hand, and joyfully exclaimed —

"Welcome, Washington! We are only fifteen miles from Fort Duquesne — we will rest there to-morrow!"

To-morrow!

The battle was over.

It was the Tenth of July, 1754, and seven

hundred corses, lay beneath the scalping knife, near the banks of the Monongahela.

The French and Indians were holding festival among the dead; the white man had his dance and his wine, and the red man, his harvest of scalps — all among the dead of Braddock's field.

And through the wilderness, over the very path where an army eager for battle, sure of victory, passed two days before, fled the dismayed wreck of twelve hundred warriors.

A young soldier, stood on a crag, which overlooked a valley, and commanded a glimpse of the distant Monongahela. Two horses had fallen under him in the battle; the third had died of fatigue in the terrible flight; and the fourth — a white horse, worthy of his rider — was tied to a neighbouring tree.

This soldier standing upon a crag, with arms folded, and lip pressed between his teeth, looked down — and saw the wreck of Braddock's army whirl beneath him, like a torrent suddenly undammed.

Men without arms, men faint with wounds, men dying on the road, and stretching their hands in vain to their brothers — this was part of the sight which he saw.

But the full terror, and confusion and panic of that flight, who can paint?

And there borne in a tumbril, which was rudely jolted by the irregularities of the road, Braddock, the General, was slowly dying, devoured at once by pain and remorse.

His folly had sacrificed seven hundred men.

No wonder that the brow of the young soldier darkened, no wonder that his bosom heaved, as he saw this miserable wreck of an army, whirl by, without purpose or aim, save to place mountains and rivers between its living and the fatal field on which its dead men lay.

The blue uniform of the young soldier was marked by bullets and stained with blood. He had dared the fiercest peril, shared the darkest danger of the fight — his ears were filled even now with the shrieks of the dying.

But in the fight the Face of a beautiful Girl had been near him — hovering now on the white mist — now smiling from the dark cloud. Her Memory had never forsaken his heart. And the story of her life, and of the life of her People — told by the old Hunter in the Cavern Chapel— had made its impression on his soul.

"When the Battle is over I will return!"

And now he was returning — from no victorious field — from the Acaldema of the West — the glen in which the Hunter's cabin stood was not one hundred yards from the crag; he had stolen from the retreating army for a brief hour; he would visit the cabin, and join his comrades near midnight.

Leaving his horse by the tree, he hurried down the rock, he drew near the glen.

How visions of the future rose before him in that hurried and lonely walk!

He was young; he was brave; but twenty-three years old, he had already won a name of which the oldest warrior might be proud.

And even from the desolation of the wilderness, he might gather a wild flower to bless with its fragrance, his heart, his home.

This forest girl, Marion, dwelling in the wilderness — alone with her grandsire — a beautiful form, an angel face, linked with an angel soul! Should she hold no influence on his life? Where in all the world could he find a heart so true, a soul so pure and virginal?

Pardon the young man for these wild reveries — but he was young — the blood of early manhood was in his veins — the dreams of youth still blossomed about his heart.

"She is so beautiful," he thought, as he hurried along — "When the old man is dead, she will be left alone in the world. Can I leave her alone in the wilderness — can I desert purity and tenderness, like hers, in the hour of its loneliness? Ah — even now, it may be, she weeps over the corse of her only friend —"

With that thought he hurried on.

Before him, a tall rock rose in the sun — on the other side of the rock lay the glen which embosomed the cabin — the Home of Marion, the forest girl.

"Ah — they are standing at the door, the old man and the beautiful girl. I will behold them as I stand at the foot of the glen. They await me. They have looked for my coming all day long."

Thoughts like these crowded upon him; his blood began to bound; he looked toward the rock, and hastened onward.

He reached the rock, passed it, and looked up the mountain glade!

It was bathed in sunbeams on one side;

GEN. SULLIVAN.

GEN. WAYNE

COL. LEE.

wrapt in shadow on the other; he stood at its southern extremity, and from its northern termination caught a glimpse of the smiling sky.

But the cabin was not visible, for it stood among the trees, buried — all save the rugged door — by boughs and vines. Neither did he behold the image of the old man, with the dark-eyed girl standing near.

A hundred paces lay between him and the cabin.

Do not smile at his violent agitation; do not chide him for his wild enthusiasm, for the Face of the girl is present with him now, as he hurries on — he hears her voice as he heard it in the delirium of fever — he resolves to bear her from this forest dell, and show the gay world what beautiful flowers are reared by God, even in the howling wilderness.

He nears the cabin door —

And you will remember that the young Virginian, in mere personal appearance, was worthy of the proudest woman's love. He was tall — well-proportioned — his face moulded not so much after the "classic style," but moulded — as a face should be, which is intended to express the manhood of a chivalric heart.

He stands at last before the cabin door. Framed in flowers, the face of the young girl looks forth from the shadows — the withered hands of the old man are extended in the act of blessing him. No — No.

The flowers before that door are withered. Blasted the flowers, the leaves — the very boughs are green no longer, but stripped of life, they fling their black limbs to the light.

Where the cabin stood two days ago, now is only a pile of sightless and smoking embers!

It was a moment, such as do not occur to any man twice in a lifetime.

He stood palsied, gazing upon the ruins and the blackness, looking for some traces of a living being — but unable to speak or move.

"Marion!" he said in a broken voice.

No answer came. A stillness like midnight was upon the place.

The young soldier advanced — blackness and ashes, nothing but ruins wherever he turned.

The mouth of the cavern was before him. The memory of the old man's Revelation came back at the sight; he passed into the Chapel, and saw the sunshine stealing over those flowers and fruits of gold. But the Chapel was vacant — no sound or trace of humanity. It was like a tomb.

Deeper into the cavern the young man passed — while he was gone, the night came down — and when he came forth, his face looked hollow, ghastly by the light of the rising moon.

There was a single tress of brown hair wound about the clenched finger of his right hand.

He hurried away, he mounted his horse, he joined the retreating army. But never from his lips passed a word concerning the fate of the old man or his child.

But when America became a nation, there was in the cabinet of the President a sheet of time-worn paper, encircling a faded tress of hair, and bearing the superscription — "MARION, *July 11th*, 1754." That was the only record left on earth of the

FIRST LOVE OF WASHINGTON.

LEGEND TENTH.

THE DEATH OF BRADDOCK.

Braddock was dying.

At the foot of a sycamore, whose white trunk glared like a ghost among the dark pines, was stretched all that remained of the brave General, who, five days before, had gone forth so proudly to gather laurels from the wild hills of Monongahela.

His throat was bare; his face pale as a shroud, and imbued with the apathy of despair, that neither hopes nor fears, was illumined by eyes that shone more brightly as the night of death came on. Sometimes he lifted his hand to the fatal wound near his heart; sometimes he rolled his eyes around the faces of the dismayed spectators, and then, turning his own face to the shadows, he bit his nether lip, and longed for death.

It was in a glen, whose northern side was bathed in sunlight; while the southern side was wrapt in shadow.

A glen, strewn with broken arms and fragments of artillery, with here and there the body of a wounded man. Crowds of panic-stricken men were scattered in groups over the sward, talking with each other in low tones, and speaking with livid lips the name of the fatal massacre — MONONGAHELA.

It was the fourth day of their flight from that terrible field. For four days and nights they had pursued their way, stricken with panic, and only nerved to exertion by the example of their leader, a Virginian youth of twenty-three; and as they bore the body of their wounded General, now in a rude tumbril, now on horseback, and last of all in their arms.

But five days ago he had gone forth so proudly on his war horse, bearing the commission of his king; and now, at the foot of a sycamore, alone in the dark wilderness, he was looking death in the face.

While a group of soldiers, whose tattered uniforms and scarred faces bore traces of the fight, gathered near him, and watched his dying face, the valley or glen, only seven miles from Fort Necessity, became the theatre of a strange and varied scene.

These soldiers had paused only for an hour, — paused that Braddock might die — but still possessed by the panic which had maddened them since the fatal day, they gave their baggage to the flames, buried their cannon in the bushes or underneath the sod, and stood panting for the moment when they might resume their flight.

Therefore the glen was dotted by groups of affrighted soldiers, who talked in low tones with each other; therefore, through the shadows of the woods arose pyramids of flame; therefore, no man thought of meat or drink or repose.

The only thought was this — *When Braddock is dead and buried we will fly as we have fled, these four days and nights.*

The day was fast declining.

Only two men, in that dreary valley, seemed to keep firm hearts within their breasts: — The man who was dying at the foot of the sycamore.

— The young Virginian who stood near him, watching his agony with fearful eyes.

The General reached forth his clammy hand:

"George," he said, and his voice was husky with death, "Let all but you retire. I would be alone with you before I die."

Washington took the offered hand, and the pale spectators retired in silence, gazing from afar upon the white sycamore.

For some moments there was silence, while

the living and the dying gazed steadily into each other's faces.

Braddock's face, pale with death; clammy on the brow and glassy in the eyes — Washington's visage, pale from fever and fatigue but lighted by a soul whose fire never for a moment grew dim.

It was a sad, a meaning contrast.

At last the silence was broken by the husky voice of Braddock —

"George, in a little while I shall be dead" — his lip did not quiver, nor his eye wander — "When I am dead let me be buried in my uniform, and let my body be protected from dishonor."

Washington pressed the cold hand, and answered in a subdued voice —

"It shall be as you wish."

"George," continued Braddock — and a last throb of pain distorted his face — it was only for a moment — "I have a last word to say to you. It is not of friends, now far away — I may have those who love me, who long for my return. But why speak of them? Before the sun is low, I shall be dead — "

He paused and turned his face to the shadow.

"Speak! If you have a message, I will fulfil it!" whispered Washington, bending over the dying man.

"These weary days of our retreat have brought strange thoughts home to me!" said Braddock in a calm voice. "I scorned your advice — I did more — I scorned that instinct of a heroic soul which fills your bosom, and which is worth all the experience in the world. Behold the result!— An army cut to pieces — my name given out to dishonor — seven hundred corpses out of twelve hundred living men!"

His eyes grew brighter — his voice rose.

"Do not speak thus!" faltered Washington, wrung to the heart by the last words of the death-stricken man.

"And for myself, a dishonored name, an unknown grave!"

"No! no!" cried Washington

"There is no need of flattery at this hour. The truth, if never seen before, comes up terribly to us in the hour of death" — and the eye of the dying man suddenly brightened into new life. "Young man, I marked you in the hour of battle. I saw you resolved and calm, while all the rest were mad with rage, or palsied by dismay. That battle, which to me is dishonor, which to seven hundred others means only defeat and an unwept grave, to you — to you — is life and fame!"

He dropped the hand of young Washington, and sank back against the tree, pale, and cold, and trembling.

Washington could not speak.

Bending near the dying General, one hand still extended, while the other shadowed his face, he felt the memories of his boyhood come over him — suddenly — like a burst of sunshine through a thunder cloud — and a thought of the Future took shape before him, and panted with life.

Well was it that the shadowing hand hid the agitated face of young Washington from the gaze of the dying General.

And over the dreary glen the fires were brightly burning, and through the thick foliage great pillars of cloudy smoke rose in the evening sky, and here and there, collected in groups of two and three, the dismayed soldiers watched the dying man from afar, and talked of the fatal day of Monongahela.

It is a terrible thing to see one man ridden by the nightmare fears of insanity, but the most terrible insanity is that which throbs at the same instant in the breast of a large body of men, palsying and firing every heart by turns, and overwhelming the individuality of every man by one universal terror.

A panic like this swayed the fugitives from Braddock's field. They were fresh from the scenes of massacre; they feared the war-whoop of the Indian might startle the silence of the pass before another moment was gone; they turned from side to side, in expectation of the rifle shot and yell of murder.

And all the while Braddock was dying at the foot of the sycamore, with the young Washington kneeling near him.

"George, had I won the battle, your name would have been lost to fame. But the battle lost, it was your glorious part to save the living from the dead, and bear the torn flag from the grasp of the enemy. Therefore the battle lost for me is a battle gained for you, a battle won for your country — for the day will come when your countrymen, remembering Brad-

dock's fight, will call for their young hero, and demand his sword in a more glorious field."

Few words were spoken after this, between the dying and the dead.

With the declining day, the life of Braddock faded fast away. When the sunset lingered on the top of the loftiest oak — it rises yonder on the northern side of the dell — there was no longer a dying man stretched at the foot of the sycamore.

There was a corpse, clad in scarlet, with a deeper scarlet near the heart — a corpse, resting on the sod with leaden eyes, turned toward a glimpse of the sunset sky — and a group of silent and dismayed soldiers, standing near the dead, the form of young Washington rising over all.

Some few paces distant, hardy backwoodsmen with spades in their hands, flashed the earth aside, and made a grave for Braddock in the centre of the road. A dreary road leading through the wilderness from Fort Necessity to Fort Duquesne, which had felt the hoof of his war-horse five days ago, and now was to embosom his corpse.

Mournful, and yet sublime in its very desolation was the funeral of the dead General.

The grave was sunken — a cavity yawned in the centre of the road — while the fresh earth lay piled in brown heaps on either side.

The evening shadows were upon the scene. Still trembled sunset upon the lofty tree, and the golden sky began to deepen into night.

They wrapped the dead man in a tattered flag. The red cross of England was laid upon his breast, and the folds of the torn banner shut him out from the light forever. They held his body over the grave; two rough backwoodsmen, one convulsed with rude emotion, the other calm and tearless as stone.

The fearless man held the head of the General, and every eye remarked the giant stature, the broad chest and scarred face of the uncouth backwoodsman.

"My Brother!" he said, as he gazed on Braddock's face — it was his rifle that had dealt the death to the General, on the fatal hillside of Monongahela.

At the head of the grave, his form erect and his forehead bare, stood Washington, his torn attire showing the bullet marks of Braddock's field The shadows gathered thicker — his face and its varied emotions were not visible — but through the stillness and the gloom they heard his voice, speaking some words of hope over the body of the dead.

The form of those words, their exact memory has long since passed away, but Washington never till his latest hour forgot the twilight of that lonely glen, when standing at the head of the rude grave — dug in the centre of the road — he gave the body of Braddock to grave-worm and the clod.

They lowered it into the grave — the rugged backwoodsmen, one trembling, the other firm and tearless.

And as the last glimpse of light left the tree-top, and the first star came out from the world of Heaven, they heaped the earth upon the dead, and levelled it like a floor, passing the men and horses and heavy wheels over the road where the hero slept.

For they wished to save the corpse from dishonor, from the white man's scorn and the red man's steel.

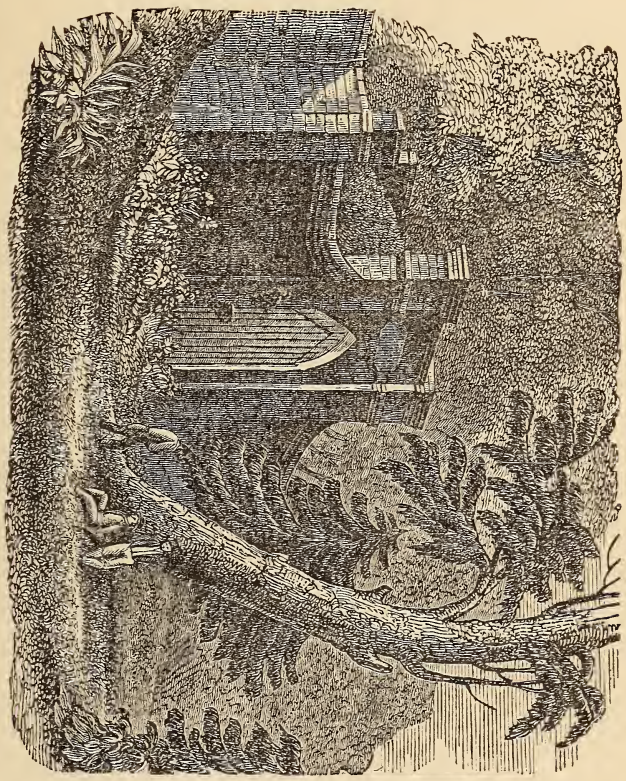
Thus, without one sound of funeral music — neither the roll of drum, or the shrill peal of musquetry — they buried Braddock, at the twilight hour, in the centre of the road. The tramp of foosteps, the tread of horses' hoofs, the groaning of the cumbrous wheels — these echoed sullenly over the grave, as the silent procession passed along — these were the only sounds which broke the silence of the General's funeral.

Soon the fugitives were on their way again — through the forest, from the direction of Fort Necessity, came the murmur of their dreary march.

Two figures lingered still — one near the grave, leaning on a sword, and the other near a tree, cutting some rude characters into its rough bark.

And the one who leant upon his sword, and with a swelling heart stood over Braddock's corpse — for there was no traces of a grave — was Washington.

The other; a giant hunter, grimly clad, with many a scar upon his face. You may guess his name. He traced with his hunting knife upon the bark of the tree, two crosses, one in memory of the place where Braddock lay — the other in memory of the hand which winged the fatal bullet, or, perchance, in memory of "Brother Arthur."



THE TOMB OF WASHINGTON.

LEGEND TENTH.

THE KING AND THE PLANTER.

In a venerable edifice, dedicated to the memory of a thousand years — crowded with monuments which resembled palaces — dense and heavy with the atmosphere of death — a young man stood one night in the fall of 1760, leaning against a column, his arms folded and his eyes cast to the floor.

That ancient place was full of light and darkness — light more vivid than day, and darkness deeper than the night. The great pillars flung broad shadows over the floor, with belts of radiance quivering here and there; the monuments stood boldly forth in red light, their flowers of marble, and images of death, glowing into life and bloom; the arches of the place, stretching from pillar to pillar, and bewildering the eye with the intricate mazes of Gothic architecture, waved with the banners of a royal race. Banners rich with armorial splendors, and sad with emblems of the grave.

The young man leaning with folded arms, against a pillar, gazed in silence down a broad aisle, which led among colossal monuments, like the track of time among the dead of past ages.

It was an impressive sight which met his gaze. Advancing slowly, to the sound of low deep music, a coffin burdened with velvet and gold, appeared in the centre of a circle of lighted torches.

Upon that coffin a crown was laid — it shone from the black velvet like a strange jewel, set upon the breast of Death.

Around the coffin were yeomen of a royal guard, clad in gay attire, and behind it, a long procession extended far into the distance, until its light and splendor dwindled into one little point of brightness. There were priests clad in sable — princes tottering under the weight of robes, whose lengthened trains were borne by lines of vassals — peers whose coronets glimmered dimly under jet black plumes.

The far-extending arches flung back the music, which groaned in a dismal chaunt for the dead — a dirge which had a voice but no sorrow, a moan but no tears.

The same torch-light which flashed over the gorgeous sadness of the funeral array, beamed upon the face of the young man, while his form was lost in shadow.

In that great temple he stood alone. On one side was darkness; on the other the coffin glittering with a crown, and the procession dwindling away in brightness, until it was lost in the distance.

The face of the young man was by no means unhandsome. It was a fair face; the eyeballs somewhat protuberant, the nether lip hanging with an irresolute expression, but the eyes were clear deep blue, and the low forehead and blonde complexion were relieved by carefully arranged hair, strewn with white powder, after the fashion of the time.

He was dressed in sable; on his left breast shone a single star.

And while leaning against the pillar, his blue eye glanced upon the procession, the coffin and the mourners, which every moment drew

nearer, the young man's face was agitated by a singular expression.

It gave a glow to his cheek, imparted brightness to his eye, and made his irresolute lip, seem firm and determined.

This expression was not sorrow — it was joy — joy whose very intensity was sublime.

For standing alone, by a great column of Westminster Abbey, the handsome youth, whose form and face were ripening fast into beautiful manhood, did not weep as he beheld the coffin — did not feel his heart grow heavy with even one throb of awe, as the dismal funeral chaunt swelled wearily upon the air.

It was the coffin of a king which he beheld. Within that coffin lay the corse of a powerful king. They were bearing him slowly along the broad aisle — amid encircling soldiers, priests and peers — under the arches hung with banners — with the chaunt of death, the solemn gleam of muffled arms, the sweeping of princely robes, and bearing him to the vault which yawned in the centre of the abbey.

And yet there was no tear in the young man's eye. He gazed upon the coffin, watched each minute detail of the splendid mockery, and uttered in a low voice the simple words —

"*And I am* KING OF ENGLAND — *now* ——"

The young man was George the Third, gazing upon the funeral of his royal grandsire, George the Second.

He felt it in every vein, it shone from his eye, and with an involuntary impulse, he reached forth his arm, exclaiming once more—

"King of England — King of England ——"

King of England!

Not the England which a Norman Robber conquered, one morning in the distant ages. Not the England which quivered under the iron footsteps of the Third Edward, or grew drunk with blood under the Eighth Henry. Not the England which saw Elizabeth upon the throne; Elizabeth who dipped her fair maiden hands in the blood of Mary, and boasted amid her virtuous orgies that she was, in truth, the Virgin Queen. Not the stern, heroic England which tried a crowned criminal, and sent him to the scaffold, as a warning through all time to Royal Guilt. Not the England which grew great and strong, stern in courage, mighty in its victories, mightier in its people, under the rule of a Brewer, named Cromwell.

No! But an England, strong with the accumulated conquests of ages, red with the concentrated carnage of a thousand years: at once, infamous with consecrated Murder, and glorious with an Empire mightier than Imperial Rome.

This young man, clad in sable — a star glittering on his breast — can lay his hand upon the Map of the World, and sweeping his Royal finger over England, Scotland, Ireland — over North America — over India — exclaim, without a boast:

"This, and this — and this — one-eighth of the world, at least, is mine!"

Was it not enough to bewilder even a royal brain?

India, won by an hundred thousand corpses, multiplied by ten — Canada conquered with the blood of Wolfe, poured forth upon the rock of Quebec — North America, from Georgia to Massachusetts, secure under the dominion of British Custom, British Taxes, and British Law — Scotland, reeking with the carnage of Glencoe — Ireland, beaten down at last, trampled into dumb anguish, into slavery that had no lower deep ——

This was "England" in 1760, and over this England George the Second had reigned; and the handsome youth, George the Third, was about to reign.

Therefore the spectacle of the royal funeral — the coffin with purple and gold, the death-chaunt and the long train of splendid mourners — brought no sorrow to the heart of the young man, who, leaning against the column, murmured —

"I am King of England — now" ——

And there came no omen to fright the soul of the young King, there was no word of the future to make him feel afraid. The banners that waved from the wide arches, the priests and lords who came along the aisle, the chaunt of the death, and the coffin adorned by a Crown, only spoke to him of a glorious future, of a kingdom unbroken by dissension, an imperial sway, consecrated by God and acknowledged by men.

And all the while through the dark night which brooded over London, Westminster

Abbey illuminated for the reception of the royal corpse, shone like a funeral pyre.

Let us for a moment gaze upon the handsome face which is turned toward the light, while the young form is buried in shadow. Let us mark the joy now glowing warmly on the cheeks and flashing clearly in the blue eyes. Let us stand in the midst of this dread Mausoleum, called Westminster Abbey, and while the splendors of a royal funeral mock the monuments that start into view on every side, and England sends her Prince and Priest to bury the dead King, we will look upon the face of the living Monarch, who, blessed by youth, is about to enter upon a glorious career.

At this moment, we will ask one or more rude questions, in our plain, peasant way —

Is there no danger in the future for this King?

"*Have the coming years any judgment for his Throne, any stern decree against his power and the power of Kings like him?*"

There is danger for the King; danger for his Throne; danger for the power of Kings like him.

Where?

In England? Is he not the Sovereign Lord, backed by a horde of Nobles, backed by a code of bloody penal laws?

Not in England — but yonder? Yonder, over the ocean — follow me across the trackless ocean, into a land whose awful forests and dread solitudes, compare but poorly with Westminster Abbey, now flashing through the dark night, like a sublime funeral pyre.

We are here, by the waves of the Potomac. A mansion, not remarkable for its height, or its breadth, or for the splendor of its architecture, rises on the summit of a gently sloping hill. It is half encircled by trees, and from yonder window, the ray of a lamp trembles out upon the dark river.

Entering the room lighted by that lamp, we behold a man of twenty-eight years seated beside a table, his cheek resting on his hand. He is clad very plainly. In fact, he wears the costume of a Planter of 1760. His form, tall and muscular, his face sharpened in every outline, indicate a life of some experience and toil.

Before him, on the table, rests a letter, and a sword whose long blade is covered with rust. It may be seen that there are stirring memories connected with the letter and the sword, for as the solitary man gazes upon them, his eye brightens and his cheek flashes into vigorous bloom.

It is a very plain, uninteresting scene; such as we may behold at any moment of our lives. A man of twenty-eight years, seated alone, in a neatly furnished chamber, his cheek resting on his hand, and his brightening eye fixed upon a letter and a sword.

Look upon him — mark each outline of his form — note each outline of his face. You see nothing remarkable in the scene. It is only a Virginian Planter, sitting alone in his home, by the banks of the Potomac, at dead of night. That is all you behold.

The contrast between this solitary figure and Westminster Abbey, flashing with ten thousand lights, crowded by a royal funeral, tenanted by a dead King, and a living — is it not idle to think of any contrast?

And yet the solitary Planter buried in thought, sees spreading before him a succession of wild and phantasmal pictures. He is dreaming, not in sleep, but dreaming wide awake.

He is mounted upon a horse; that sword is in his hand; an army of peasants, only peasants, extends around him. He is in battle; his army is crushed in dust and blood. But another army darts into being from the dust and blood; his sword is still in his hand, and now — waving over his head — a flag, such a flag as never was seen before, flutters on the air of battle. There is another contest; there are cold faces upturned to a setting sun, and then the scene changes.

Still it is only a dream, a wandering dream, but the Planter is in the Senate Hall of a People — how vague, how wild a dream! In the Senate Hall of a People — and amid the deep silence of a breathless multitude, he is invested with the crude insignia of a great office — he is hailed as the Liberator of a Nation — acknowledged as the Ruler of freemen.

Such are the dreams of the Planter, and rising from his seat he advances to the window, and looks forth upon the night.

He smiles as he thinks of his waking dream — and yet it still pursues him, with its pictures of battles all ending with a free people,

all terminating in that scene, where a nation of freemen hail their Ruler in the person of their Liberator.

Smiling at his vague wild thoughts, the Planter approached the table again — pauses for a moment while the light streams over his young face, already stamped with thought — and then absently, scarce conscious of the action, lays his hand upon his sword —

There is the danger, which the future has in store for King George the Third.

There — in that hand grasping the sword — in that eye lighting up with soul, in that face stamped with a Prophecy of the Future — there is the judgment which threatens the future of King George and all Kings like him.

They are burying the dead King in the Abbey. They are placing the gorgeous coffin in the vault; there are lines of torches, and splendid apparel, deep crowds of mourners, and a living King beside his grave.

At the same moment, perchance the Virginia Planter, away in his new-world home, in his silent chamber, grasps his sword, and dares to think of the Future.

He utters certain half-coherent words —

"This sword I wore at Braddock's field — and" —

He did not say where he would wear it again, but his hand presses firmly the hilt of his sword.

Was his dream false? Did that sword ever threaten the power of King George?

LEGEND TWELFTH.

WASHINGTON'S CHRISTMAS.

A LEGEND OF VALLEY FORGE.

An ancient pistol, grim with the dents of battle, black with the rust of years, its stock of dark mahogany inlaid with brass, its barrel at least fourteen inches long, its tarnished lock bearing the dim inscription, "G. R.—1718," traced beside the figure of a Royal Crown.

An ancient clock, looking out from its coffin-like case, with its dusky countenance sculptured into dead flowers, the words "*Augustin Neiser, Germant'n*, 1732," engraven in distinct round hand, beneath the hands — an ancient clock, whose bell rings out through the silence of the night, with a clear, deep, silver sound, like the knell of a dead century; the last word of the last of an hundred years.

An ancient arm chair, framed of solid oak, the paint worn long ago from its brown arms, the rude carvings which surmount its high back, worn long ago, as smooth as polished marble, with the letters "J. K., 1740," cut in rough old German text, well nigh blotted out by the touch of an hundred years.

An ancient Bible, massive in its heavy covers, and clasped with pieces of carved silver, its pages, embronzed by age, stained with the traces of many a bitter tear, comprising that "Family Relics" — in itself the history of a race.

An ancient round table, fashioned of walnut, that was planted on the Wissahikon hills, three hundred years ago, when there were Red Men in the land, who rudely worshipped God in the rocks and trees and sky, and made Religion of their Revenge — an ancient round table, once strong and firm, but now creaking and groaning as with the anguish of its memories, that reach far back into the shadows of an hundred years.

— They are all in my room, at this dead hour of midnight and silence, as I write these words, all glaring in the light of the wood-fire which crumbles on the hearth.

The clock stands in the corner, pointing to twelve, the arm-chair is near it, spreading forth its arms, as if to catch the full warmth of the fire. The Pistol with its voiceless tube, rests upon the Round Table, on which I write, and outspread before me, is the venerable Book with its clasps of silver.

I might tell you the story of these Relics of the Past, and believe me, the story which they bring home to me — or rather the hundred dif-

ferent Legends — would make the tears stand in your eyes, the blood pulsate tumultuously about your hearts.

For in that arm-chair, more than a hundred years ago, an old man sate, bearing the name which now is mine, and lifted his withered hands and blessed his five sons, five manly boys, reared in the woods of Wissahikon, which I am so foolish as to love and cherish, even at this hour, when it is blasphemous to love any God, but the Lord of the Silver Dollar.

That old man — whose bronzed face and hair as white as drifted snow, presented a true Image of that French-German race, who left their native land, and brought their Spiritual Faith, which taught that God might be worshipped without Church or Priest, or Creed, here, to the hills of Wissahikon, here to the rolling vallies, called Germantown — that aged Father, laid his withered hands upon the brown locks of his sons, and blessed them as he died.

Of the Fate of those sons, a volume might be written. Not a volume for those to read, who love big names, and pretty uniforms, and smooth sentences, soft and tasteless as the pulp which fills your Critic's skull, and passes for brains — no ! But a volume for those ignorant souls, to read and love, who like to see the Providence of God, shining out, even from the records of the humblest Home.

One son, went forth from that old man's roof and in the Dream-Land of Wyoming, reared himself a Home, and worshipped God, even as his father, without Priest — save the voice of his own soul — or Temple, save that which was sheltered by his fireside rafters, or that glorious church which had the Mountains for its pillars, the green vallies for its floor, and for its dome, the blue canopy of God's own sky. That son fell in the Massacre of Wyoming ; at this hour the white monument, erected on the banks of the Susquehanna, bears his name, enrolled among the Martyrs.

Another son, died in battte, in the cause of Washington. Of the Third and his race, all traces were lost, until two years ago, when I pressed the hand of his grand-son, who came from the hills of Carolina. The Fourth went forth into the western wilds and left no trace or record of his fate.

The Fifth and last son, dwelt all his life in the home of his fathers, and saw many children blossom into the bloom of womanhood, or the prime of manhood. Death has reaped every man of them all, and gathered them into the full sheaf of the graveyard : and at the present hour, the author of these lines is the only man that bears the name of the white-haired Patriarch who one hundred years ago sat in the arm-chair and blessed his children as he died.

You will therefore know what I mean, when I say that these relics of the Past, have a voice for me, as sad, as tender, as a sound from the lips of the dying.

The old clock that rings so deeply now, its silver voice pealed as clearly in the bloodiest hour of the Battle of Germantown. The Round Table on which I write, once bore the paper on which Lord Cornwallis traced the hurried and deadly details of the fight. But it is not of these historic memories that I speak : No ! There are other and more tender memories. That old clock pealed at the birth hour of all my people, and rung their knell as one by one they died.

Around the Table, how many faces have been gathered in a Circle of Home, faces that now are lost in graveyard dust !

In that old chair, many a form has reposed — how many, how revered, how dear — that now find rest, within the narrow panels of the coffin !

And the old clock, like a spirit whom no anguish can one moment sway from his calm watch over the dying men and dying years, rings out now, clear and deep, as it will ring when I too, am gathered to the graveyard sheaf.

The Pistol too, so grim in its battered tube and stock, has a story — sad, touching — linked with the tradition of the Round Table, the arm chair, the clasped Bible and centuried Clock. The pistol alone, never belonged to my people, but there was a time. in the dark hour of the Revolution, when Clock and Chair, Bible and Table, passed into the hands of a collateral branch of my race, and became connected with the grim thing of death, in a Legend of harrowing yet tender details.

Let me tell you that Legend now, while the old cloak, with its silver voice, rings out the Hour of Twelve !

There was snow upon the hills; a mass of leaden cloud, with broken edges, was hung across the sky; through the deep gorges, down to the river, roared the winter wind, howling the funeral song of the dying year; and yet, within the stone farm-house of Valley Forge, the Christmas fire burned with a warm and cheerful glow.

A spacious room, with white walls and sanded floor, huge rafters overhead, and a broad hearth, heaped with massive hickory logs.

On that hearth, in the oaken chair, sat a man of some sixty years; his athletic form, clad in coarse garments of reddish brown, his hands, cramped by toil, laid on his knees, while his face glowed with its long beard and hair turning grey, and hues darkened by the summer sun, in the cheerful light of the Christmas fire.

True, the garments of the old man were of coarse home-spun — true, his floor was covered by no gay carpeting — the huge rafters overhead concealed by no paint or plaster, and yet, as he sate there, the room had a joyous look, full of the word *home*, and his dark brown cheek, with its hair and beard, silvering from brown to grey, spoke something of a heart at peace with God and man.

Crouching on the hearth, her head laid on the old man's knee, a girl of sixteen years — her young form blossoming fast into the shape and ripeness of woman — turned her clear hazel eyes towards the light, and twined her small hands among the cramped fingers of the old man.

Her form was attired in plain home-spun — boddice and skirt of dark brown — and yet it was one of those forms, which, in the warm bosom just trembling into virgin ripeness, the lithe waist, and the rounded outlines of the shape, remind you very much of a flower that quivers on the stem, the red bloom just peeping from the green leaves, and quivers more gently in the moment when it is about to burst the leaves, and blush into perfect loveliness.

A very loveable girl, with a soft, innocent face — almost soft as infancy, and innocent as the prayer of a child — was this maiden, crouching by her father's knee on the hearth of stone. Her brown hair, parted in two rich masses, flowed over his knees, and half concealed their hands.

"Katrine," said the old man — he bore the plain German name of Israel Kuch, and spoke with a German accent — "it is now twenty years and more, since I left my native land, with the brethren of my faith. They would not let us worship God in our own way; so we followed Him into the wilderness, and made our homes where no man dare murder his brother on account of his creed. You know our custom, Katrine?"

The young girl looked up, and in a voice soft and whispering, answered:

"Every Christmas night, at the hour of twelve, when the Lord Christ was born in the manger of Bethlehem, we sing the Christmas hymn, and read a chapter from the Book of God."

You see this old pioneer of the wilderness, dwelling in the woods of Valley Forge, has planted in the heart of his child the name of Jesus!

Silently she rose, and gazed upon the old clock — it stands there, in the corner, with its broad face to the fire, pointing to the hour of twelve — and then taking the old Bible with silver clasps from the table, she laid it on her father's knees.

A Christmas Picture!

The old man, seated in the arm-chair, the young girl, in her virgin bloom, bending before him, the same fireside glow, warming his withered face, her velvet cheek, and revealing the opened Bible, whose silver clasps shone like stars in the ruddy light.

Israel's face was suddenly mantled with deep sadness:

"There was a time, Katrine, when your mother was here to sing the Christmas hymn. She sleeps in the grave-yard now ——"

There was another absent, whose memory comes freshly to their hearts, though his name is not upon their lips.

"*He*, too, is absent from home. *He* journeys with the men of war: *he* has forgotten that religion of peace which he learned by this hearth, when he sang with us the Christmas hymn!"

The brave and fearless Konradt! Even now, turning her eyes — they were wet with tears — from the light, Katrine remembered him, her brother. A man of twenty years, with a form like the forest poplar, a ruddy

brown face, brilliant with large grey eyes and shadowed by masses of chestnut-colored hair. Katrine saw him as he looked on the day — nearly a year gone by — when, with his true rifle in his grasp, he passed the threshold of home, bound for the Camp of Washington.

The old man knelt, and laid the Bible on the chair. Witnout, the storm howled, and the snow fell — within, the Christmas fire flung its merry blaze, and the voice of prayer arose. By her father's side, knelt the young girl, placing her clasped hands on her bosom, while the fringes of her closed eyelids swept her cheek.

And as the storm howled, the old man read hose words which are at once poetry and religion. Beautiful it was to hear, in that lonely home of Valley Forge, swelling from an old man's lips, the very words which the Christians of Rome, hunted to death, like wild beasts, read in the catacombs — those cities of the dead, hidden beneath the city of the living — eighteen hundred years ago!

And there were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

The clock rung forth the hour of twelve, as the last word died on the old man's lips.

Clasping their hands over the Bible, they bent their heads in silent prayer, her brown curls mingling with the grey hairs of her father. And the fireside light shone over them, as they knelt, and baptized them with its glow.

But suddenly, breaking like a thunder crash upon that house of prayer, a sound was heard, mingling with the howling of the storm, and yet heard distinctly from that howling, as the musket shot is heard through the cannon's roar.

A footstep — it is in the yard without the farm-house — it is upon the stone steps leading to the porch — it is upon the porch, and the door springs with a crash, wide open.

At once, with the same impulse, Israel and his child rise from their knees: with dilating eyes they behold the sight, which we may be hold with them.

Upon the threshold stands a wild figure, gazing round the room, with a glassy — a horror-stricken stare. It is a man of some twenty-five years, whose hair and beard increase the deathly paleness of his face, with their raven-black hues, and give a wilder glare to his eyes — so dark, so bright, so full of horror.

"John!" — the solitary word shrieked from the maiden's lips, for in the wild form she recognized her lover — her betrothed husband.

"John!" the old man echoed — "you are a man of peace reared by my dearest friend, your father, in the lessons of the Gospel, and yet I behold you standing here, on Christmas night, a bloody weapon in your hand — that hand itself stained with blood!"

Not a word from the lips of the intruder!

Staggering forward, he dashed the pistol on the floor — it is there, dripping blood, even where the flame glows brightest — and sank, like a lifeless mass, at the old man's feet.

"Save me, Israel, save me!" — he shrieked — "for I have done murder, and the avenger of blood is on my track!"

"*You!*" — the voices of the old man and his virgin child joined in chorus.

"Yea — I — I! — the child of prayer; — I so far forgot the lessons which I learned from my father, as to become one of a secret band of Loyalists, who have taken an oath to uphold the cause of the King. They swore to have the life of the Rebel leader — cast lots, who should do the deed — the lot fell on me."

In the excess of his remorse, he suffered his head to droop, until his dark locks touched the floor. The old man stood as though a thunder-stroke had blasted him, while Katrine, raising her hands to her forehead, gazed upon her lover with an expression of bewildered pity and horror.

"I swore to do the deed! To-night, I saw Washington leave his quarters, near the Schuylkill — tracked him toward this farm-house — a solitary dragoon rode some few feet behind him. You see, I was wound up to madness by the horrible oath — I nerved my soul for the deed — I fired!"

"You killed Washington?"

"No — no! The night was dark — my

aim unsteady — I fired — the pistol exploded in my grasp — I saw the dragoon, the innocent man, fall from his steed! I am a murderer — the curse of Cain — I feel it fasten on my forehead Hark! The Rebels pursue me — I am lost!"

The sound of hoofs, the clattering of swords, resounded outside the farm-house. In a moment the Americans will enter, and secure the assassin. The strong man, who grovels on the floor — blasted all at once into an image of despair, more from remorse than fear — raised his head and moaned in a tone of agony —

"Israel — I am lost!"

"You have done a terrible thing in the sight of the Lord, John — but I will save you."

Hark! The soldiers have dismounted, they are on the porch — the old man drags the murderer from his knees, and points toward the eastern door.

"Enter! It is the bed-chamber of my absent son. A secret passage — built in the time of the Indians — leads into the cellar, and from thence into the fields, a hundred yards from the house. You will find the door on one side of the fire-place — I, myself, will hurry to the fields, and open the spring-house door — for into the spring-house this passage leads!"

With these muttered words, he thrust the murderer into the bed-chamber of his son — closed the door — and turned in time, and only in time, to confront a band of American dragoons, who rushed from the porch into the room.

"The murderer?" shouted the foremost dragoon — a man stalwart in form, with a steel helmet, surmounted by a bucktail plume, on his brow, a sword gleaming in his hand. "The murderer? — where is he? He went this way — entered this house — we must have him —"

The old man with his beard imparting a venerable appearance to his face, stood erect, in the presence of those armed men, and surveyed their drawn swords without a fear.

And Katrine — where is she?

Upon her knees, before the Bible, spread open in the old arm-chair, her brown tresses flowing over her shoulders, her eyes closed — the blood-stained pistol touching the folds of her dress.

It was a moment of fearful trial to the aged Christian. He would not lie — he could not give up to certain death any man, even a murderer, who had claimed sanctuary in his home. And yet, he must either utter a lie — or surrender up to death the son of his old-time friend.

"Why do you enter my home, with your drawn swords, at this still hour of Christmas night?" he slowly said, anxious to gain time. Hark! There is a creaking sound in the next room: the murderer has discovered the secret door.

The only reply which Israel received was a sword levelled at his heart.

"Come! no words! We know the Tory is in your house; and the Tory we will have, by ——"

The brawny soldier clutched the hilt of his sword, while the point was directed at the old man's heart. Meanwhile, in stern silence, his comrades gathered round, grasping their pistols and swords, with a death-like stillness. The Christmas light flashed over the kneeling and unconscious girl — over that solitary old man, and along the group of maddened soldiers.

"Friend Thompson, you would not stab an unarmed man" — began Israel, in a voice that trembled with contending emotions.

A sudden — a decided reply! The captain made one deadly thrust with his sword, and a half-uttered cry of horror, gasped in chorus by his brother soldiers, echoed round the place. For even to them, maddened by revenge, there was something horrible in this murder of an unarmed old man.

The sword flashed home, to its aim. Does the old man fall a mangled thing, staining his own hearth with his blood?

"Come, Captain, this is somewhat *too British* for an American soldier!" spoke a strange voice; and a murmur of surprise rose from every lip, as the Captain's sword fell clattering on the floor.

Why that murmur of surprise? Why this sudden silence? Wherefore does even old Israel stand silent — wondering — dumb

That stranger, with the commanding form, and noble face — stern, determined in its very mildness — rivets every eye.

"WASHINGTON!"

As the cry rose once more, the stranger ad-

vanced, and laid the bundle which he bore — a wounded man, his forehead marked by a hideous gash — upon the hearth, in the strong glare of the fire. The stiffened arms of the insensible man touched the dress of the unconscious girl.

"Quick — my friends — some water for this wounded man!" said the stranger; "I fear me he is dying! I would not have him die thus, for our cause knows no braver man than Cornet Kuch!"

The last word froze the old man's blood. So much had his gaze been rivetted by the solemn presence — the warrior form of that stranger — that he had not time to gaze upon the burden which he bore, half concealed in his cloak.

But the *last word* cut him to the heart. He wheeled on his heel, and by the light of the Christmas fire beheld the wounded man extended on the hearthstone.

His own son dying, with a hideous wound upon his forehead; lips, eyelids and cheek clotted with blood.

For a moment he reeled backward from the sight, and turned his face away.

The troopers stood as if spell-bound. Washington's face writhed with an expression of involuntary anguish.

He turned his face to the group again. It was changed — horribly changed. That face, on which peace seemed to have set its seal forever, was now livid, ghastly, compressed in the lips, and wild as madness in the eyes.

"My son!" he incoherently gasped. "Lord, Lord my God, this cup is too bitter! Let it pass from me! My son — Konradt! No! no! It cannot be!"

There seemed to be a red light — a sea of blood bathed in the glare of flames — rolling before his eyes; his senses swam, his eye shone with horrible lustre.

He strode forward and grasped the pistol from the belt of Captain Thompson.

"He hath slain my son — the bone of my bone — the blood of my blood — the prop of my old age! Stand back and let me pass! The murderer is in the spring-house in the field. He shall die by my hands!"

He rushed from the room into the night and the darkness.

"Follow him," cried Washington. "He will do harm to himself — and mark ye, let no one, on peril of life, do harm to the murderer of Cornet Kuch!"

It was at this moment that Katrine awoke from her swoon. At this moment, when her father rushed forth, pistol in hand, to do a deed of murder — when the soldiers, stricken dumb by his agony, retreated from his path — when the voice of Washington was heard enjoining that no harm should be done to the murderer of her brother.

She rose — swept back the brown hair from her brow — gazed upon her brother's form, with the fatal wound on his forehead.

At a glance, by that divine instinct which God hath given to women, as he bestows glory upon his angels, poor Katrine read the whole dark mystery.

"I will save my father from this deed of murder!" she cried, and darted into her brother's bed-chamber.

Washington was alone with the wounded man. His cloak thrown aside, you see his tall form clad in the uniform of blue, relieved by buff, his good sword depending from the buckskin belt. His face, glowing with the mature manhood of forty-seven years, now bears upon every firm lineament the traces of deep mental anguish.

He silently places the Bible on the round table, beside the arm-chair, lifts the bloody pistol from the floor, and then raises the dying man from his resting place on the hearth.

Gently — like a dear mother nursing her child — he places the wounded soldier in the arm-chair, and bathes his brow with cold water.

Then bending over the insensible man, surveying that frank countenance, now pale as death, he washes the blood away, while a deep ejaculation rises from his lips.

It is a scene for us to remember — Christmas Night — the lonely farm-house — Washington, the Liberator of a People, revealed by the Christmas fire, as he bathes the brow of a wounded, a dying man.

Katrine, with her heart throbbing as though it would burst, entered the door of the bed-chamber, and saw the wretched murderer, seated in one corner, the light revealing his livid face.

"John, you must fly —" she exclaimed, in a calm voice, that sounded to him like the tone

of a dying woman — "It is my brother who fell by your hand — but, I, the sister, will save you!"

She opened the secret door within the fireplace, and turned upon him the light of her hazel eyes.

— What words can picture the horror which broke from his countenance, then?

"Your brother?" he gasped — "Konradt, the friend of my soul? Oh, this is some horrible dream! You know that I love you, Katrine — yes, with a love too deep to be offered to a creature — a love that is mad, idolatrous! Think you, I would harm Konradt? No — no! It is a trick of Satan to peril my soul!"

He cowered upon the floor, and clutching her hands, looked with fearful intensity into her face.

"Take your hands from mine, John — they are stained with my brother's blood. The door is open, the secret passage before you — fly! I bid you — I, the sister! But my father will not spare you — even now he hurries to the spring-house, to strike you as you seek to gain the woods! Fly!"

"I will fly, but it is to meet my death at his hands!" He darted into the secret passage.

— The memory of that livid face, was stamped in terrible distinctness upon the soul of the sister, as she gazed wildly around the room.

Now was the moment for the child-like innocence of her character to spring, all at once, into the full bloom of a woman's heroism.

A shade crossed her face — her red lip grew white — she tore the fastenings from her dress, for her heart throbbed and grew cold, until she gasped for breath — and in an instant, her disordered hair, could not altogether veil the transparent loveliness of that bared bosom.

For a moment she tottered as though she would fall lifeless on the floor — the shroud on the form of death is not more pale than her face.

In that brief moment, the image of her happy home, of the last Christmas, when John and Konradt and her father, sat grouped by the same fire — rushed vividly through her brain.

"Now, one is dead — the other, will die by my father's —— But no! God will help me — I will save *them* yet!"

Light in hand, she darted into the shadows of the narrow passage.

Down in the hollow yonder, near the Schuylkill, whose hoarse murmur swells through the night, rises a small structure of dark grey stone, with a solitary door, formed of heavy oaken panels, a steep roof, overarched by the leafless branches, and a small stream, winding from beneath that archway toward the river.

In the summer time, this spring-house of Farmer Kuch is a very loveable thing to see. Then, the chesnut trees around it, are glorious with broad green leaves; there is a carpet of grass and flowers before the dark old door; the very brook, singing its way to the Schuylkill, is draperied with vines and blossoms.

But now it is winter. The trees leafless, the brook shrouded in ice, the green prospect of hill and valley, transformed into a wilderness of snow.

From that waste, the spring-house rises like a tomb, so black, so desolate, and alone.

Beside the door, stands the farmer, Israel Kuch, cold damps like the death-sweat starting from his brow, as the pistol trembles in the grasp of his right hand. His livid face you cannot see — for the night is dark, but the flash of his dilating eyes breaks upon you, even in this midnight gloom. All his peace of soul is gone: in its place, nothing but madness and revenge.

"Mine only son — the blood of my own heart murdered — no! Lord, I will not falter. Even as the Avenger of Blood, in the ancient days of Israel, followed the murderer, and put him to death, so Lord will I follow and put to death the murderer of my son!"

Listen! There is a sound in the spring-house, a rattling as of bolts unfastening, within the door. Yonder glooms the farm-house, not one hundred yards distant, and over the waste of snow, the troopers come hurrying on. The old man, in his madness, has outstripped them. In a moment they will be here, but a moment will be too late.

Listen! The bolt flies back within, but the lock without holds the door firm. With one blow the old man breaks the padlock, and with his finger on the trigger, clutches the pistol, and prepares to shoot the murderer as he comes.

That was a moment of intense and sickening suspense.

The door receded, and the ray of a lamp streaming through the doorway, revealed the old man's livid face, and flung his shadow far along the snow.

It was the murderer, lamp in hand, seeking to escape!

— Katrine stood there, her bosom bared to the cold, and defended only by her brown flowing hair. She did not see her father. How the heart of Israel throbbed in that terrible moment! But shading her eyes with her left hand, she called —

"Father!"

"I am here!" and transformed by his revenge into an image of unnatural emotion, his face from the beard to the brow, hideously distorted, he clutched the pistol and confronted his child.

"O, father! can this be *you?* A pistol in your hand ——"

"The murderer of my son — where is he?"

"But your lessons of peace, father, the Bible, which says, 'Love your enemies' — your own heart, father ——"

"The Lord hath called me, Katrine, and I am here to do his bidding!" cried the wretched man, as the hollow glare of his eyes rested upon the pale face of the maiden: "Hark! the men of war come — they would cheat me of my victim. "Ah!" he groaned — "Mine only son, mine only son, — *Konradt* mine own boy!"

There was something awful in the depth of his agony.

Scarce had his accents died, when a form wilder than his own appeared in the doorway — a face streaked with a livid blue glowed in the light, and John the Murderer confronted the father of his victim.

"Israel," he said in a husky voice, "It is past! kill me! but forgive me, for verily, before God and the angels, I am a miserable man, a sinner who hath lost his soul forever!"

With hands involuntarily joined, he stood on the snow, and awaited his fate.

The old man shrank back at first, but as if gathering strength for the deed, he presented the pistol and fired.

At the same moment the lights went out, and all was darkness.

But did you see that young form bounding in the air, those white arms outspread? The aim of the pistol was turned aside, and Katrine, crouching on the snow, clutched her father by the knees.

"O, father — you cannot do it — God will be angry with you — you cannot *murder* — nay! nay! do not shake me from your grasp — you taught me to love the Lord Christ, who says, 'love your enemies,' and I will not see you do this deed!"

"Ah! the murderer has escaped," groaned Israel, struggling to free his knees from the grasp of that heroic girl.

"No!" said a hollow voice, "He is here!"

Through the gloom, Israel beheld the outlines of the murderer's form, as he stood with drooped head and folded arms.

At the same moment the troopers, like shadowy forms, came hurrying round the corner of the spring-house, their arms gleaming indistinctly in the midnight darkness.

But the old man saw them not. Reared from infancy to love the Bible, to love above all the gentleness, the forgiveness of the Gospels, at this moment of madness, the dark scenes of the Old Testament, the terrible judgments of the Mosaic dispensation, alone possessed his soul.

"John, kneel on this sod, and pray forgiveness of your God, for at this hour I am about to put you to death!"

"No — Israel — this won't do," cried Captain Thompson, forgetting his own anger at the murderer, in overwhelming pity for the despair of the old man — "We will arrest the young man, but he must not be harmed; it's Washington's orders!"

Fiercely the old man scowled upon the group — one desperate effort he made to shake off the clutch of his daughter, and at the same instant he seized a hunter's knife and sprang upon his victim!

Every man in that crowd held his breath, but the brave girl did not unloose her grasp. Up to his heart she sprung, around his neck she wound her arms, and even as he struck, she baffled his deadly aim.

His madness now swept over all bounds. There, unharmed, stood the murderer — there grouped the awed soldiers — there. hung to her father's neck, quivered the daughter.

With one irresistible movement, he flung Katrine from his neck, and knife in hand, sprang forward. The strong man, with health in his veins, and youth on his brow, knelt calmly for the blow.

"John, the Lord hath spoken, and I obey!" and the knife flashed in his hand.

But hark! That cry heard over the waste of snow — it reaches the old man's heart, for it says "FATHER!"

Every man in the group heard that cry, and felt his heart grow like ice, with an unknown fear — *it was the voice of the dead man Cornet Kuch.*

"Joy — thank God — it is my brother's voice!" — You behold Katrine sink swooning on the snow.

The old man stood with his knife in mid-air — stood bewildered — listening — dumb.

"FATHER!" the voice was nearer.

"Oh, can the demons mock me? Am I indeed given over to the Prince of the Power of the air?" Israel pressed his left hand to his burning brain.

The troopers turned, gazed into the darkness, but they saw nothing save the indistinct outline of the farm-house, the cold dead sky.

"This puzzles me, I'll be confounded if it don't!" muttered the stalwart Thompson, as even he, an image of robust health, felt his heart chill with superstitious fear.

"Tell me — do I dream — that voice ——" the old man staggered wildly over the frozen snow.

"FATHER!" the voice spoke at his shoulder, this time.

The old farmer turned, beheld a shadowy figure, laid his hand upon a gashed forehead.

"Father! It is I — your son, Konradt — not killed, scarcely wounded—only a little stunned! Ha, ha! A mere scratch after all the outcry — come father, we will go home!"

Israel fell like a weight of lead — so heavy, so suddenly — and lay on the snow beside his unconscious daughter.

Another form advanced from the gloom, and a voice was heard —

"Captain, secure your prisoner!"

It was the voice of WASHINGTON.

In the old farm-house and by the Christmas fire again. The broad face of the clock, points with its small hand to the hour of ONE. On the round table, rests the blood-stained pistol and the opened Bible. Before the fire, extended in the arm-chair, his form completely broken down by the horrible emotions of the past hour, Israel Kuch gazes in the faces of his kneeling children. Here, Konradt with the gash upon his brow concealed in a white cloth, there loveable Katrine, smiling as the tears course down her cheeks.

The troopers wait in the yard, without, ready for the march.

Up and down along the floor in front of the fire, paces WASHINGTON, his hands behind his back, his eyes cast downward. That face is stern as death. Now he pauses — steals a glance toward the group, and then — while a scarcely perceptible emotion quivers over his face — resumes his measured pace again.

Where is the murderer in thought, the man who levelled his pistol at the head of Washington?

Come with me through the eastern door, into this small bed-chamber, where a solitary lamp lights up the fire-place, the bed with unruffled coverlet, the old-fashioned chairs, and walls as white as unstained paper.

Crouching on a chair, his knees supporting his elbows, with his cheeks pressed in his cold and trembling hands, behold the murderer. His pale face is framed in dark hair and beard — his throat is bare — his eyes, sunken in the sockets, shine with an anguish too big for utterance.

Wrapt in his own fiery whirlpool of remorse, he does not hear the opening door, nor heed the advancing form. A hand is laid upon his shoulder; he looks up and beholds the stern face of WASHINGTON. As though a bolt had stricken him, he shrinks away from that hand, for well he knows, that taken in the act of a base assassination, he has but one Future — the gibbet and the felon's grave.

"My friend, did I ever harm you?" said that deep-toned voice.

John buried his face in his hands.

"They speak of you as a quiet, a religious young man, descended from that class of the German people, who hold war and all that belongs to war, in decided abhorrence. I am anxious to know in what manner have I incurred *your* hatred — why arm yourself against my life?"

There was a light in Washington's eye, a glow upon his face. John looked up and felt encouraged to speak. In broken tones, he poured forth the whole story — grew wild, painfully eloquent, in that frank confession of *his last hour*. Entangled in a secret association of loyalists, he had been led on from step to step, until a horrible and blasphemous OATH, taken amid scenes of darkness and mystery, hurried him to a purpose, which his soul beheld with shuddering. "I cannot tell their names — my feelings of love to God, loyalty to the king were horribly trifled with it is true — but I cannot reveal their names! That OATH maddened me — you behold me now, willing to pay the forfeit of my crime, eager to die and be forgotten!"

With clasped hands and gasping utterance, he looked up into the face of Washington.

The American Chieftain turned his face away, and leaned his arm upon the mantel. By his averted face and downcast head, you may guess the nature of his thoughts.

Was he thinking of his own life, which began with a nature wild and passionate as the flowers and sun of the southern clime, and grew into ripeness with a calm, cold, stern exterior, hiding the fires that glowed within the heart? Was he thinking of his hardy boyhood, passed among the rocks and mountains of the western wilderness, and nourished into manhood through many a bitter trial?

Did *he*, that man whose warm heart was veiled with an icy shroud — who afterwards signed with an unfaltering pen and tearful eyes the death-warrant of John Andre — did *he* behold amid the wrecks of a mad fanaticism which covered the murderer's soul, the tokens of a better nature, the buds of a noble manhood?

For a long time he pondered there, by the hearth, while the miserable John ****, with his face growing yet more livid, awaited the words of fate.

"You will be tried, sir, according to the forms of law in cases like yours provided" — such were his cold words as he turned his calm face to the murderer again — "In a moment the soldiers of my Life Guard will bear you to the camp at Valley Forge."

He left the bed-chamber with his usual measured pace.

John fell upon his knees, buried his face in his hands, which rested on the chair, and tried to pray. Tried! But above him a sky of black marble seemed to spread, and as the words faltered from his lips they fell back upon his heart again like balls of living fire.

"Come, sir, the guard await you," said the voice of Washington

John started to his feet, confronted his doom, and felt — that warm, loveable Katrine quivering on his heart, her arms around his neck, her loosened hair about his face.

"There, sir, before you shoot at me again, learn to be more careful in your aim." There was a smile upon that magnificent face — something like a tear in that brilliant eye of deep rich gray.

It was a painful thing to see the freed blood pouring in one impetuous torrent from John's heart to his face — to see the wonder, doubt, tremulous joy, painted there — to see the head pillowed on his shoulders, while over his uplifted arms fell the maiden's luxuriant hair.

But a glorious thing it was to see that commanding form, one hand resting on the hilt of his sword, while the other shaded his eyes from the light, yet did not hide the nervous movement of his lips. It would have stirred your blood to behold that great man on his war-horse, riding forth to battle, but now it would have forced the tears in torrents from your eyes to view him, in that half-lighted chamber, shaken almost into womanish feeling, as he saw the result of his own — Forgiveness.

The old farmer reposed in the arm-chair, his son bending over him — the pistol and the Bible were laid upon the round table — the clock tolled one — and the Christmas Fire lighted up the faces of the lovers as they knelt and took upon their heads, the blessing and

LEGEND THIRTEENTH.

THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1776,

OR

THE DECLARATION AND THE SIGNERS:

A LEGEND OF "WASHINGTON AND HIS MEN" IN CONNECTION WITH THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

PROLOGUE.

THROUGH the deep shadows into the gay sunlight—through the trees, whose grand old trunks arise around us, whose mingling leaves wave in light and perfume above us—through the wild-wood paths, where the moss grows, and the flowers bloom—through the rocks that darken on either side, venerable with their ten thousand ages, beautiful with the vines that float along their hoary brows—through this dim old forest, where your foot falls without a sound, where your soul feels the presence of its God, and your whispered word is flung back by an hundred echoes—we will wander, on this calm summer eve.

It is the Third of July, 1776.

It is that serene evening hour, when the moss beneath your feet is varied with long belts of black and gold. It is the time when the deep quiet of nature—the distant sound of leaves and streams—the glow of the sun, shining his last, over cloud and sky, melts the heart, and steals it away, by gentle steps, to God.

Then, if we have never prayed, we will fall down and worship. Then, if we have never felt the presence of God in the awful cathedral aisle, where the smoke of the incense winds in snowy wreaths about the brow of the Blessed One, or encircles, with a veil of misty loveliness, the sad, sweet face of Mary our Mother, we will here feel our knees bend, our voices falter in prayer, our hearts go up to Heaven, even as the last ray of the setting sun melts gently up the sky.

For this wild wood is the cathedral of Nature, where every tree that towers, every flower that bends to the sod, as though sleepy with voluptuous perfume, every ripple of the stream, every leaf of the bough, says, as it floats or shines, or blooms or waves, "There is a God, and he is good, and all men are his children!"

You may smile at this—cold hearts of the world—who never rise from counting your pennies; you may sneer, grave critic, who never felt a heart-throb, or owned one thought of beauty, or suffered one word of feeling to flow from your pen and make men's hearts beat quicker; but even you, in the calm evening hour, would kneel and worship God.

For it is the Wissahikon.

I will not bewilder your hearts with memories of the past, nor tell you that every old tree has its story, every foot of mossy earth its legend; nor point back into the brooding shadows of a thousand years, when that huge rock was an altar, that beautiful stream, winding in light and shadow, the baptismal font of a forgotten religion, while here, among these shadowy ravines, grouped the maidens, their bosoms beating beneath vestments of snowy white, the priests, arrayed in midnight hues, the sacrificial knife gleaming over their heads; the warriors, whose strange costume, and dark physiognomy, and weapons of battle, have long since passed from the memory of man.

But I will ask you—

Did you ever, on a winter night, when the snow was on the ground, and the light of the hearthside fire upon your face, lean gently back in your cushioned chair, and with half-shut eyes dream a voluptuous dream of a summer evening, with the lazy sunshine bathing great masses of leaves, while a supernatural stream wound softly along, among rocks, and flowers, and trees?

Your dream is here!

Then, on that winter night, while the wind howled without, half-closing your eyes, you saw a winding path, leading far down the dell, with sunshine gushing from below, and the boughs bending toward the ground until they touched the cups of the wild flowers!

Your dream is here!

Or did you behold a cool, shady place in the midst of great forest trees, where the wild vines formed a circle of undulating leaves, and every leaf was kissing a

flower;— where the moss, forming a carpet for your feet, seemed glad, as the occasional sunbeams stole over its surface, while a rugged limb, interlacing with slight branches, all woven together with flowers, formed the roof of this perfumed forest home?

Your dream is here!

Or, did you, with your face still glowing in that hearthside light, wish to escape the beams of the July sun, and wandering from the beaten track, until the trees gathering more thickly, made a shadow like night come to the place where the leaves, descending to the very ground, formed an impenetrable barrier across your path — a wall of foliage and perfume? Impenetrable, and yet you pushed that wall aside, and stood in the shadow of an overhanging rock, from whose dark surface trickled a thousand little streams, uniting below, where the rock formed a basin, in the spring of cool, clear water, that lay like a mirror at your feet? Then, making a cup with the broad leaf of the chesnut tree, you bent down, and drank the wine of the living rocks, this clear, cold water, fresh from the caverns of mother earth.

Still, your dream is here!

Or, wandering in the chambers of a mansion, that seemed deserted for ages — the ceiling veiled in cobwebs, the floors dark with dust, the trapestry eaten by moths — feel your heart grow cold, as your solitary footfall came back in a thousand echoes, and upstarting from some dark corner, a strange woman stood before you, her beautiful form clad in black velvet, her eyes darting their deep light into your soul?

Still, here on the Wissahikon, you will find your dream!

Or, once more, — you seemed loitering along the shades of the forest-path; you heard a voice, of vivid melody, thrilling like any forest-bird, its virgin song; and following the sweet sound, you suddenly beheld an angel form, stepping from the shelter of the trees, beautiful as Eve before she fell, and gliding inch, by inch, into the clear waves, her long hair floating over the ripples which dashed against her snow-white arms?

Upon my word, your dream is here!

But suddenly, this vision of a winter night became wildly changed. Blasts of organ-like music made by the winds howling through caverns, broke awfully on your soul. Then the gust of a summer rain swept your cheek, every drop fragrant with perfume. You beheld the angel form of the young girl walk beside the dark woman, who led her to the verge of an awful cliff, smiling all the while, as she pushed the virgin towards the abyss. Flowers and skulls, perfumes and horrors, blasts from the grave, and breezes of May, were mingled in a strange — a grotesque panorama. And the last thing that you beheld, was a fair young face, sinking slowly into the waters of a fathomless abyss, her mild eye upraised, her soft voice whispering in prayer.

With a cry of horror, you awoke, wondering — as the damps of fear started from your flesh — whether, in all the world, there had ever happened any history, so full of strong contrasts, so much light, so much blackness, as this, your dream of a winter night?

Believe me, you will find the dream living bodily, and throbbing tumultuously, here on the Wissahikon!

Come with me into its shadows?

Leaving the dusty road, we behold the dark grey walls of an ancient mill, with a world of leaves behind it. Drowsily turns the heavy wheel, scattering drops of light from its gloomy timbers; sleepily trickles the water over beds of rocks: beautifully upon the mill and the rocks, the waters that are rushing there, and the leaves that accumulate yonder, glows the last smile of the setting sun.

The mill is passed: behold a narrow path, leading away into the trees, its brown sand contrasted with the grass on either side. Yonder glooms a huge rock; we reach its foot, we see the trees towering far above us, clusters of foliage rising on clusters, until but a glimpse of the blue sky is seen.

The walk is passed;— is it a dream that breaks upon us?

Far, far away, extends a track of golden light, that shines until it fades. Look closer and in that track of light, you discover the Wissahikon, sunken deep, between two walls of leaves and rocks that start upright from its very shores into the sky. And it flows silently on, receiving on its bosom that last gush of light, which pours above these heights from the western sky.

Yonder, the leaves descend to its waters, and embrace it, as though they would bury it from the light, in a veil of foliage. The vines bend over it, and scatter their blossoms upon its waves. The very path seems to love it, for descending from these rugged steeps, it leads along the shore, only separated by a line of sand and flowers from its waters.

The stream narrows, the trees almost meet from opposite sides, when suddenly this wild enchantress,

the Indian maid, called Wissahikon, opens to us a prospect as strange as it is wildly beautiful.

Stand with me, on this clump of green and shrubs, and behold it! Yonder, on the left, a wall of rocks rises, in gloomy grandeur into the sky. The waters gush upon their feet, the pines — see them far overhead — crown their brows. Black and dismal, rocks heaped on rocks, cliff starting over cliff, this wall towers above us, its dark surface, here and there relieved by vines, or shadowed by trees. that grow between the clefts, their green branches shooting into light from every pile of granite.

To the left, the woods ascend, in a rolling outline, like a wave of the ocean; only for ripples, you have leaves; for cheerless water, delicious foliage, wreathed with flowers.

Directly in front, the narrow path leads up a steep hill. On the summit of that hill, a house of grey stone, encircled by a garden, a spring of cold water, gushing into an oaken trough, one solitary tree, bending over the steep roof, and rising, alone — a pyramid of leaves — into the evening sky.

The last ray of the sun is trembling on the top of that tree!

Between the hill covered by the house of dark stone, and this gloomy wall of cliffs, comes the Wissahikon, chafed into a rage by the rocks spread in her way, and writhing, on every wave, into a white foam, that looks like spring blossoms agitated by the wind.

She came leaping over the rocks, filling the wild dell with the voice of her agony; but the moment these rocks are past, she is calm again — she subsides into a gentle lake — she lovingly kisses the feet of the cliff. whispers in those caverns, and ripples her blessing to the flowers on yonder isle!

We ascend the hill, and lingering on its summit, taste the waters of the spring, as we gaze for the last time upon the setting sun.

Then, into the shadows, along the wood that darkens, until we stand upon the rock, with the Wissahikon far beneath our feet.

Look down!

Rushing from the north, her course is stayed by this dense mass of earth and trees and rocks. With a sudden movement, she wheels directly to the west, and hurries smilingly on. Look down! How calm, how like the sinless sleep of Eve in Paradise, that water smiles as it rests in the embrace of its beloved trees!

Here the bank is steep and precipitous; yonder the woods shelve down into a level point of land, which projects into the clear waves. So dense is the shade cast by the overhanging trees upon the dark, rich earth, that but a few scattered clumps of grass and flowers overspread its surface. Look down! Around that point, beneath the trees that stretch out their arms as if they loved it, the Wissahikon ripples, smiles, and glides on without a sound.

Look down, but do not let your gaze wander too long upon the clear deep waters. For there is a strange fascination in those waves that wiles you to their embrace, and makes you wish to bury life and its troubles among their ripples.

To yonder rock, where the dark waters spread into a limpid sheet, not deeper than your ankle, at dead of night, when the moon shone out over the trees, there came a young girl, who silently bared her form, and laid herself to rest, upon the pebbled bed, with the cool waters dashing over her bosom. The night passed, and she slept on. The morning came, and they found her there, with head rising and falling with the gentle motion of the stream, her brown hair floating in the ripples, her white bosom now covered by the waves, now laid bare to the light. She slept well, upon the pebbled bed, rocked by the waters. No stain was on her name, no grief upon her heart. The aged man, her father, who lifted the corse from its watery cradle could not impute to her one guilty thought.

Her attire was found upon yon rock; her Bible and prayer book on the grass beside the stream.

She had toiled three weary miles to die upon the bosom of the stream she loved so well.

And when the old man laid her on the bank, there was a sad, sweet smile upon her face, as though some good angel had kissed her in her closing hour, and left a blessing on her lips.

Along the northern path, with the stream roaring below us, we will hurry on.

A beautiful picture! That cluster of old cottages and barns, grouped beside the mill, with rocks frowning above, and a sea of foliage, swelling into the sky. In that cottage, Rittenhouse, the Philosopher, was born; between yonder rock and the buttonwood tree lies the space of earth which witnessed one of the darkest tragedies that ever froze the blood but to hear told again.* The blood of a father poured forth by the son, moistened that grassy sod.

* See the Legend of the Parricide, page 98, of "Washington and his Generals," by George Lippard.

Beside the mill, a mass of rocks chokes the course of Wissahikon. Above the wall of rocks, extending from the mill-wheel to the opposite shore, how calmly it glides on, its bosom shadowed by the trees that meet above its waveless waters! Below, how it darkens, and boils, and foams, filling the air with its shout!

Let us enter the light canoe, and while the oar makes low music to the ripples, glide softly on! Behind us pass the trees, still there are new groups ahead! Behind us bloom the flowers, still new blossoms greet us as we go! Behind us flashes the ripples, still before our canoe the stream extends, with foliage rising to the sky on either side.

At last emerging from the thick shadow, we beheld a mound-like, covered by a strange edifice, built of stone, with steep roofs and many windows, and a garden blooming far down into the glen.

That is the Monastery, in which the Monks of Wissahikon, long ago worshipped their God, without a creed.

In this space, between the mill which we have left and the Monastery which rises before us, on the eastern banks of Wissahikon, behold a quiet cottage, smiling from among the forest trees. It is built in the space between two colossal rocks; above it, far, far into the sky towers that wall of leaves; from its narrow door to the water's edge a plot of level earth extends, green with moss and blooming with flowers.

Even as an altar, on which the dearest hopes and fondest memories blossom, so from the forest out upon the waters, looks that Cottage Home of Wissahikon

This was on the third of July, 1776.

Now, the rocks are clad with wild vines; the garden is a waste. Yet, searching among those vines, you may still discover the traces of a wall, the scattered stones and broken roof tile of that forest home!

And the story of that home, the strange Legend of the wild Rose that bloomed there, which leads us into scenes of absorbing interests now unveiling to our gaze, the Hall of Independence, crowded with the shadows of the past, now treading these shades and dells of Wissahikon, shall be inscribed with a name worthy of the purest page that ever kindled a generous emotion in the heart, or raised the soul with words of holy truth—

TO

* * * *

THIS STORY OF THE PAST IS DEDICATED.

THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1776,

OR

THE DECLARATION AND THE SIGNERS.

CHAPTER FIRST.

OLD MICHAEL, THE HUNTER.

A hale old man, leaning on his rifle, with an iron frame, a bronzed visage, and snow-white hair!

It was in the midst of the forest, where a huge oak tree, torn up by the roots, lay prostrate on the sward, the brown earth yet fresh about its trunk, its leaves still blooming in summer green.

He stands before us, that old man, an effective picture of a bold backwoodsman; his broad chest and muscular arms displayed in their firm outlines by the folds of his blue hunting shirt, his limbs encased in buckskin leggings, moccasins on his feet, and a fur cap, green with a solitary oaken sprig, resting on his brow.

The rifle on which he leans, long and dark and marked with scars, betrays the indications of thirty years' toil in the woods, and danger on the mountain path.

Strung over his broad chest, a belt of dark leather sustains his shot pouch and powder horn. In the broad girdle, — a wampum belt, inscribed with the language of the red man — which encircles his waist, gathering in its confines the loose folds of his hunting shirt, a knife is placed, its handle of bone contrasting with the long and glittering blade. His face impresses you at once with a picture of green old age.

Bronzed by the winter wind and the summer sun, marked with the traces of many a deadly conflict, the hair blanched into snow by the touch of seventy years, it displays a prominent nose, a broad chin, high cheek bones, and a firm mouth, encircled by heavy wrinkles. Indeed, the whole visage is traversed by wrinkles that resemble threads of iron, in their strongly marked outlines.

From the shadow of his thick grey eyebrows, the gleam of two clear eyes, undimmed by the frost of age, now blue, now grey in their liquid, breaks gently on you. Gently, and yet there are times when the light of those eyes remind you of a panther at bay, his blazing orbs glaring from the darkness of a cavern.

And the old man, this hermit of the woods, who speaks a plainer speech with his rifles than with his tongue, stands before us, on the sward; the leaves spreading a weaving roof above him, the evening solitude of the woods extending on every side.

He lifts his cap — fashioned of the wild beast's hide — and that solitary ray of sunlight wandering through the foliage, streams upon his white hair.

By his side, reclining on the trunk of the prostrate oak, you behold a form whose every outline is strongly contrasted with the figure of the old backwoodsman.

It is a young man in the vigor of early manhood. His form, well-knit and muscular, yet delicate almost to womanly beauty, in its graceful outline, is attired in a costume of dark velvet — a coat reaching half-way to the knee, and girded to the waist by a belt of leather — boots of the same hue encase his limbs, and a white collar thrown open at the neck, displays the chiselled outline of his throat.

Yet it is not upon the dark attire enveloping his agile form that you gaze, nor upon his beautiful rifle, whose dark tube is relieved by the mahogany stock, mounted in silver, nor does the powder horn, inlaid with golden flowers, nor the hunting knife, with its carved ivory handle attract your eye.

It is that face, with the black hair falling back from its brow along the neck, from under the wide shadow of a slouching hat; it is that eye that seems to burn with light, as it rests upon you; it is that olive cheek now reddening with emotion, now pale as marble; it is that mouth, which wreathes in a smile, or curves in scorn, which now speaks in low tones, were music wins you, and again, utters its deep voice, that indicates a soul conscious of power!

It is upon that face, moulded, not with the regularity of an ancient statue, but with firm and characteristic outlines; the face framed in the shadow of the hat of dark felt, with low crown and drooping brim, that you gaze, in the quiet evening hour.

One limb crossed over the other, the right arm resting on the trunk of th fallen tree, the head downcast, and the dark eyes fixed upon the sward, the young man seemed absorbed in thought, while the old hunter stood erect by his side.

After a pause that lasted some five minutes, the old man turned and gazed upon his young comrade.

"It's queer — reg'lar queer!" he said, with a slight laugh, and then paused as if waiting for an answer.

The young man was silent.

"I say it's queer — it's particular strange — I mought say ridiculous! To think that you and I have been out in the woods, time off and on, for six months back, and yet neither of us knows where the t'other lives, nor even his name!"

"What need of a name?" said the young man, without raising his eyes from the ground — "we met last winter, among the wilds of the Susquehanna. We hunted together, shared the same rude meal, after our day's toil, and at night slept side by side, on a bed of withered leaves. You called me Walter — I called you Michael. What need of other names? We met and were friends!"

Walter played listlessly with the handle of his knife, as he spoke. Still his eyes were fixed upon the sod.

"But Walter, don't you know yer voice betrays you? — Yer speech is not the speech of the backwoodsman, but the talk of the city and the village. Yer rifle and knife, aye yer dress itself, don't speak much for yer poverty. Yer hands are too white, yer skin too fair, to fancy for a minute that you've lived long in the woods. But, howsomever it is I can't tell, but I like ye, and have liked ye, since the day — "

"When, away yonder on the Susquehanna, my rifle missed fire, and the panther sprang at my throat. Your aim was good, your eye true, or I should have been a dead man. Michael, you saved my life, and there's my hand!"

The old hunter extended his horny palm, and grasped the delicate fingers of his young comrade, with an iron clutch.

"A month ago we parted at least an hundred miles from this — to-day we meet again, here in the woods of Wissahikon — "

Walter raised his full dark eyes. A strange smile passed over his face.

"It would be interesting for us to compare our history for the past month," he said. "This is a quiet hour. The evening air is cool, delicious. These old woods make a man feel on better terms with himself and the world. And the sound of the waters, lulling gently on the ear, seem like the voices of other days, telling of the joys, the sorrows, that are past and gone. Come, Michael, begin — tell us the history of your life for the past thirty days."

The young man started, as he witnessed the strange effect of his words. Michael stood before him trembling, as with an ague chill, his sunburnt face writhing in every chord, while his eyes blazed with that panther glare, which made the heart beat quicker to behold.

"Tell you the history of the past month?" he said, in a voice and with a manner entirely different from his usual rough, backwoodsman way. "There are some things, young man, that draw the knife from the belt, and raise the rifle to the shoulder. Things that it wont do to talk about, not even in a whisper! Deeds, aye, I say it, deeds that make the blood run cold. But," and he advanced a step, while that light blazed more fiercely from his eye, "what do you know of my history for the past month?"

The young man started to his feet. He extended his hand —

"Nothing, Michael — not a word, not even a whisper," he said, examining the face of the

old man with a searching glance. "I meant not to rouse one bitter memory in your heart. Come, sit down by me; I will," and that strange smile passed over his face — "I will tell you the story of *my* life for the past thirty days."

The old man did not reply, but, taking the young man's hand within his own, he led him for some few paces along the woods.

"Look thar!" he said; in his usual rough voice, "thar is my home!"

Far down the woods, through a vista that extended among the trunks of massive trees, the young man looked and saw a quiet cottage with a garden, blooming from its door to the verge of a calm, unruffled glimpse of water.

The woods, through which he gazed, were wrapt in thick shadow; but the roof of that cottage, resting between two rocks, gleamed brightly in the setting sun. Above it swelled the sea of forest leaves, below sparkled the still Wissahikon — it was like a picture framed in waving leaves and glancing waters.

"Thar's my home!"

"*Your* home!" echoed Walter, hiding his face in his hands, and turning away from the old man, while he shook with emotion.

Michael gazed upon him with unfeigned surprise.

"And ain't it a purty home? Did you ever see a nicer bit of happiness hid away in the woods than that? O, if you could but see the angel that dwells thar with me, and keeps house when I am out among the woods, and puts her soft hands on my forehead, when the — aye, I must speak it — when the dark hour comes on me; if you could but see her and know her you would worship her!"

Walter raised his face. All traces of emotion had vanished, but he was very pale and his eyes shone with peculiar lustre.

"That's your home!" he calmly said, "what a beautiful home it is!"

"Perhaps he has his memories, too!" the old hunter muttered, "God knows!"

The young man took his hand, and whispered, "Michael look yonder!"

Michael gazed far down that vista, and among the huge forest trees, and with hushed breath beheld a sight as strange as it was beautiful.

From the door of that cottage home came forth a young girl clad in a peasant garb — a light boddice, fitting close to her bosom, a dark skirt, flowing to her feet — with her brown hair blowing lightly about her face in the evening breeze.

She tripped along the garden, and stood by the water's edge.

Her eyes were cast down the stream, her bending form assumed an attitude of anxious expectation.

Presently, gliding from the trees, a light canoe broke into view, and in it stood erect the form of a woman, attired in a dark robe, with her face glowing in the warm light of the fading day.

She leapt lightly on the shore — the young girl seemed to start with surprise, but this woman in the dark attire seized her hands and urged her gently into the cottage.

They disappeared together, and the closing doors concealed them from the view.

Had Michael and his young comrade beheld the scene, which then transpired within the cottage home, they would have felt their hearts beat quicker, their blood bound, like liquid fire, through their veins!

But they did not witness that scene; they only saw the young girl, and the dark-robed woman, go in the cottage door together.

For a moment Michael and his comrade stood in silence, gazing in each other's faces, as though spell-bound by that sight.

"That's strange!" at last the old man said, — "Who the lady in the dark dress can be is more than I can tell! I never knew before that the child was acquainted with anybody in the world, save me! Ah, now I think of it, that visiter is the rich widow who resides in the large mansion on t'other side of the Wissahikon! But how came she to know my child?"

"She is your child?" cried Walter in a hurried tone — "your daughter?"

"My Daughter? Hah! What do you mean? My Daughter!"

You can see the old man's cheek assume the hue of ashes, his lip is livid and his eyes are fixed upon the ground.

"Young man, you have touched the bitter chord agin! Don't you know that it's better to cut one's heart with your knife, than to do it with a word?"

"Pardon Michael, pardon! I have known

you hitherto but as the rough child of the forest. Now, that I behold in you the owner of this beautiful home, the father of this—"

"Father?" hurriedly interrupted old Michael.

"Who told you I was father to that angel girl? Sixteen years ago I brought her to to that place, an innocent and smiling babe!—Sixteen years ago I built that home! For sixteen years she has grown up in solitude, and every hour of those years grown deeper into my heart! Yes, it is sixteen years and one month, since that night."

Again the old man paused, his countenance betraying the traces of mental agony. While Walter, leaning his noble form against yonder tree, with his head downcast, gazed fixedly in the face of his comrade, you see that aged comrade clutch his rifle with quivering fingers, dash the stock into the earth, and then pace wildly to and fro.

Again he spoke in that tone so different from his rough backwoodsman voice. He spoke not as much to Walter, as to his own soul, not so much with the consciousness of a human eye gazing upon his face, as the EYE OF GOD reading his soul.

"What—what have I not done to wash out the memory of that night! O, it was pitiful,—it was horrible! Satan himself could not have painted so dark a picture, nor planned so accursed a deed! A home in flames—two dead bodies thrown beside the hearth, a husband and his wife! Both young—one noble in his manly vigor, the other beautiful in her womanly purity! And beside the body of the dead husband a little boy stood weeping; over the cold bosom of the dead wife a baby crept, pressing its lips to that font which was dried forever! And the wretch who led on the midnight assassins, who leagued with red savages and white robbers, came, at dead of night, to lay this home in ashes, came with his face blackened, the torch in one hand, the knife in the other. Who was he? A fiend? No, a BROTHER!"

He stood, with his outstretched hands, quivering in every finger, his eyes glaring in the sod. The white foam frothed about his livid lips.

Walter stood appalled by the violence of the old man's emotion.

You may behold him, leaning against yonder tree, his face manifesting in every outline, surprise mingled with horror.

"That house, blackened and in ruins, lies two hundred miles away in a green valley of the Alleghanies. It stands there as it stood for years, a black witness of unnatural guilt. On its hearthstone the blood has never faded; from its walls the ghosts of the dead have never gone—no, not for an hour! And to that ruined house, once every year—in June, when the trees are in blossom, in June, when the murder was done—there comes the form of the murderer to gaze upon the traces of his crimes. For one month, day and night, he crouches down upon the hearthstone, gazing upon that mark of blood, that hideous blotch of red that glares in his face, as though it had a thousand eyes, all fired by the same curse!

"For sixteen years, on the return of June, the murderer has been dragged by invisible bands over mountain and flood to that blasted house! For sixteen years he has been forced by voices that speak from the air, and speak to his heart, like the anathema of the archangel, to write a confession of his crime, and place it in the dead woman's grave! Sixteen confessions are there; sixteen records of that bloody deed!"

His look was terrible, as towering erect, he shook his clenched hands in the air, while his eyes rolled and his mouth frothed around the writhing lips with scattered drops of foam and blood.

"Who says that repentance can wash out crime? You may forsake the world, bury yourself from human eyes, throw wealth and rank to the winds, put on humble attire and pray all day in the woods, and groan all night in the desert where no eye but the eye of God can hear, and still the faces of the murdered will never cease to glare at you, and move their lips as though they would speak but could not! You may take the child from the breast of the mother, bear it away from the scene of crime, rear it up to womanhood in purity and virtue, and yet the child will one day learn your crime—that child will live to curse the man whom it has called father, and hiss in his ears the words: "*Thou didst it on a dark night! Thou didst it when all was still! Thou didst it when husband and*

wife lay wrapped in each other's arms! Then THOU DIDST MURDER MY MOTHER!"

That frenzied voice sank into an accent of overwhelming agony.

"To be cursed by her — to be cursed by— ROSE!"

You may have seen a huge rock, precipitated from an immense height upon the void below. Descending in a straight line, it strikes a lofty tree, and ere you can draw another breath, crushes it, from the top to the roots, into one mass of ruins.

As though he had been that tree, as though the fallen rock had, in its dread career, taken life and plunged upon his skull, the old man, Michael, rushed to the earth; so sudden was his fall, so stiffened and lifeless upon the sod he lay.

Walter knelt beside him. He gazed upon the pale features and glassy eyeballs, in silence. The emotion which had but a moment ago shaken the old man's frame, seemed now to have passed into the veins of his comrade, for every feature of his face was in motion; with his hand pressed nervously against his forehead, he gazed into the countenance of the insensible man.

The sun had gone down, and the shadows, cast by the trees, in long columns of darkness, began to grow wider and deeper. The forest was still as a deserted cathedral. Not the sound of distant water, nor the rustling of the wind among the trees, disturbed the brooding silence of the Wissahikon woods.

And let me tell you, to be among those woods when that silence so awfully spiritual pervades the air, while the foliage, spreading around, makes noonday seem like twilight, is to feel your soul grow nearer to the other world. Then, your heart feels sad, you know not why. Then the memories of your past life, rush upon you. Then through the long arcades and bowery glades, half-closing your eyes, you seem to behold the forms of beloved ones, long since dead, gliding slowly to and fro.

Walter — this young man, whom we have known by that name — with an eye, always gleaming brighter in time of danger; a heart, that throbbed tumultuously with passion, or fired with the love of the beautiful and holy; a soul, ever swayed by impulse, capable at once of the highest heroism and the purest self-denial, felt the influence of this evening hour.

His thoughts were dark to agony!

We dare not picture their nature; but, as he bent over the insensible man, he seemed to behold two faces, gliding along the twilight sky, with wreaths of mists about their clearly defined outlines.

One, the face of a sinless girl, whose young face and tranquil eyes seemed to woo him from the world and its cares and fears, into these dear solitudes of Wissahikon. The love of that maiden face was stainless; the passion of those clear deep eyes undimned by the mists of sensual feeling.

The other, the face of matured loveliness, with ambition gleaming from those dark eyes, the love of the world and the world's feverish joys burning in the vermillion glow of each olive cheek. That high brow, that dark hair, floating in showers of glossy blackness over the half-bared bosom, that red lip, curling with scorn, or parting with passion, completed the picture of this strange, yes — the terrible face.

"One woos me to the shadows of the quiet woods, and asks of me a love as virgin as these solitudes! The other plunges me into the tumults of the world, bids me grapple with the weapons of ambition, and share the throbbings of a love that beats with the madness of fever and wine! *His* daughter! *She*, so proud, so distant, whom I have only seen afar off, and by glimpses; *she* seeks the presence of the peasant maid! What can it portend?"

As he kneels there, absorbed in his thoughts, a singular incident occurs.

Do you see that strange form, with long and matted hair descending to the broad shoulders, and folds of crape veiling the face, move noiselessly from tree to tree?

As you look, it crouches on the ground — and crawls, snake-like, along the sod; — it reaches the fallen trunk, against which the silver mounted rifle leans. Beware, Walter, for there is treachery in the soundless movements of that uncouth shape! But he does not see it; no, he does not behold his rifle grasped by those brawny hands, the pan unclosed, and the priming blown from beneath the flint.

In a moment the rifle is replaced, and the form of this unknown enemy moves noiselessly away.

Still Walter knelt beside the form of the in-

sensible man; still the vision of those two faces occupied his soul.

As his thoughts thus rose in singular confusion to his lips, he was roused from his reverie by a distant sound, resembling the cry of fear or agony. It rose, it swelled, it came through the silence of the woods like the voice of a spirit. Walter felt a shudder pervade his frame. There was something almost supernatural in this sudden cry, breaking so abruptly on the death-like silence of the woods.

He started to his feet, and grasped his rifle! Again that cry!

With a bound he hurried up the ascent of the steep, covered by those huge old forest trees. That cry seemed ringing like a knell of death in his ears. The trees, the rocks, a long slope of level sward, flew behind him; and his course was presently interrupted by the boughs of a beachen tree, which descending to the very sod, formed a wall of green leaves across his path.

Again that cry! Not ten feet distant it was heard. Walter plunged through the foliage of the beachen tree, and started back with a sudden bound, as he beheld a spectacle that made his heart beat as with pulsations of flame.

A beautiful woman, kneeling on the sod, her bosom bared, her long hair falling to her shoulders, with hands and eyes upraised, in a trembling gesture of prayer!

Above her — standing with his back to the sun — you see the figure of a thick-set and muscular man, who lifts a rifle above the head of the kneeling woman. As he turns toward the light, you see his face, covered with folds of crape, while from beneath his rough cap of fur, long locks of draggled hair wave in the light. Altogether, as he stands there, he looks the bravo and outcast, fitted by a dark experience for any deed of crime.

"Your gold; — come, no delay! Them ear-rings, and that jewel on yer bosom! Come, I say!"

The rifle, grasped by the barrel, like a huge club, rose above the kneeling woman's head.

At this moment, Walter sprang from the foliage and confronted the ruffian.

"Back!" he cried, and levelled his rifle.

The Outcast only rested the stock of his rifle on the sod, and a low laugh came from the folds of crape which enveloped his face.

"Fire!" he said, with that low, growling sound of laughter.

From yon aperture among the trees, the last glow of the western sky gives a purple light to the scene. You see that craped face, framed in its bushy locks of hair, that thick-set form, with the right arm wound round the barrel of the rifle. Walter starting forward, his rifle raised to his eye, his manly form disclosed in all its delicacy of outline by the dress of dark velvet, relieved by the green of the trees. Between these figures, the form of the kneeling woman, her beautiful countenance pale with suspense, her bared bosom throbbing with quivering emotion. In the tranquil light of this still hour, her dark hair, showering so freely over the white shoulders, assumed the purple tint of the twilight.

"Fire!" cried the Outcast; and again that laugh broke on the air.

Walter applied his finger to the trigger — there was a harsh, jarring sound, but no flash in the pan — no report from the tube.

"Ha, ha, ha! That for your rifle!" And, with the celerity of a lightning flash, he seized the jewelled chain from the neck of the lady, and stood erect, calmly leaning on his rifle.

Walter at a moment's glance, saw that he must prepare for a desperate conflict. Dashing his rifle on the sod, he drew his hunting-knife, and advanced upon the bravo.

"Come," he growled, "I'll tame your blood!" and, without moving an inch from his position, seemed about to spring on his antagonist, like a rattlesnake on the unsuspecting victim.

He raised his arm to strike that unknown man, but the kneeling woman bounding from the sod, flung her arms about his neck. "Save me!" she cried, and lay fainting on his breast. Her long hair streaming over his face, for a moment blinded his vision; with a sudden movement, he swept aside those silken tresses.

The bravo, the Outcast, was gone!

But there, in the arms of Walter, the hunter, in this deep evening hour, lay the form of a beautiful woman, whose matured loveliness was enveloped in a close-fitting habit; whose bosom, lately heaving with emotion, now lay white and pulseless beneath his gaze; whose arms, round and full, were wound about his

neck, while her dark hair streamed in glossy masses over his shoulders.

A wildly beautiful woman; a voluptuous organization; a face, rich olive in hue, with the lids closed and the lashes resting on the cheek, displaying in its calm forehead, marked brows, and firm lips, the traces of a bold and ambitious nature!

"It is the vision which for a month past has, day after day, flitted across my gaze, from the far distance!" he said, and felt his temple burn, his veins swell as with liquid flame.

Wishing to gaze yet more clearly on that beautiful face, he turned toward the western sky.

As he turns — but no! it is a fancy, a dream! — the fainting woman uncloses her eyes, while a smile of triumph wreaths her proud lips. It is for a moment only. When Walter looks again, the lips are smileless, the eyes closed as if in death.

Walter gazed, for a few moments, upon that face motionless as marble, while his very soul seemed lost in the vortex of a whirlpool. His eyes swam, his temples throbbed, he could feel his heart beat against his bosom.

At last a soft flush pervaded her olive cheek; her lids were slowly raised, the full blaze of her dark eyes rested upon Walter's face.

With a bound, she sprang from his arms; even in the dim shadowy light of that hour, Walter beheld the rich blushes ripen over her face and bosom.

"Thanks, good sir — you have saved, perchance, my life," she said, in her musical voice, yet with a manner of calm dignity.

Walter beheld her standing in the centre of that forest bower, and as the light of her eyes, the expression of her commanding face, dawned upon him, through the gathering gloom, he started with surprise. For a month or more, this strange woman, seen through the vistas of the forest from afar, had filled him with a bewildering interest. Now he beheld her face, he felt the light of those eyes which flashed with all the consciousness of intellectual and voluptuous power.

"Lady Marion!" he exclaimed. "We have met before! In the Court of St. James, surrounded by a circle of admirers, glittering with stars and coronets, I last beheld you. Now, in this lone forest ——"

"Ah! I remember well your face. though I never knew you to converse with you. Your name was whispered among the courtiers — indeed, the King himself stated that wealth and chivalry had not often found a nobler representative than Reginald ——"

"No names, lady!" And Walter bowed low as he spoke. "In the forest, ha, ha! we are but plain man and woman, you will be pleased to remember!"

"Did you not first set the example? 'Lady Marion,' indeed! Doubtless you wonder to find me here, in this wild place. I frankly confess that you are the last person I should have expected to behold — shall I say hoped? — here in the woods of the Wissahikon!

She advanced, and, with that smile playing over her face — oh! you should have seen its strange, mysterious fascination! — she lightly laid her hand upon his arm. Walter started, for her touch penetrated his veins like electric fire.

"Would you know my mission, in these dark, wild woods? Would you solve the mysteries, not only of a poor, weak woman's life, but of government and war — would you achieve the freedom of your native land — the deliverance of the soil from the clouds which overshadow it? Come, then, to-night, at the hour of ten, to yonder house, on the opposite shore of Wissahikon!"

"I will!" said Walter, scarce knowing what he spoke.

There was the sound of a heavy footstep, and Michael — whom we left insensible upon the sod — advanced from the shelter of the leaves.

"Brave soldier, I have sought for you, through the woods, and your home!" cried Lady Marion, confronting the aged hunter, who stood surprised at her address, and yet impressed, he scarce knew why, by the sound of that low musical voice.

"You fought in Braddock's war, under Washington?"

"I did!"

"You would serve Washington? Rescue him from the perils that beset him; from the plots of his enemies?"

"With my life!"

And the old hunter brought his rifle down on the sod, by way of emphasis.

"Come with me, then, to my mansion on

yonder hill! These are strange times, when a woman must forget the modesty of her sex, in the service of her country; when the old man must feel his withered arm grow strong again, to defend that country! Come!"

Even the old hunter, whom we have lately seen writhing in convulsions — the fierce struggle of bodily or mental disease — felt the magic of that woman's look and voice.

"I'm with you!" he said; "Washington! Is he in danger? I saw the bullets rattle against the blade of his sword, on the day of Braddock's defeat — I'll try to keep them from his heart, now that his enemies encompass him! But first, young man" — he turned to Walter, and whispered in his ear — "You saw me in that fit, — just now? Eh, comrade? Notice anything particular? I'm apt to say queer things — you overheard, we — "

He paused, while his eyes flashed deadly light; he paused, hesitated, as though he wished Walter to complete the sentence.

"Pardon me, Michael, if I left you for an instant!" the young man answered, in an even voice, and with a composed manner — "This lady was in danger, or I would not have forsaken you, in such a moment."

"So you overheard nothing, eh? But come, Walter, I like you, and have liked you, ever since the day when I saved your life. I have a daughter — you understand an old man's feelings. I may die suddenly, some day; be picked off by a bullet, or fall from a cliff. This child must not be left to the mercy of a heartless world' Join hands with me, and swear before the God who sees and will judge — swear to protect my child!"

Walter turned his face away from the faint glow of light which shone from the western sky, and extended his hand.

"Your hand trembles!" whispered the old hunter.

"Still, I swear!"

"You swear to protect my child, even Rose, not only from the touch of harm, but from the wiles of the seducer, the arts of the libertine! Ah! why does your hand shrink from my grasp? Why do you turn away? Can it be, that I have been mistaken in you? Are you *afraid* to act the part of a brother to the young and helpless girl?"

Walter stood in the shadows, his face buried in his hands. Well for him that it was so dark, that forest bower! Well for him that the keen eye of the old man could not read the agony of his face!

But the woman who stands in the background, her bosom swelling beneath her robe, her finger to her lip, her eyes glancing triumphant fire — what means her agitation?

"I have been mistaken — you are not a man of courage!" said the old man, turning away.

Walter sprang forward and grasped his hand.

"Pardon me! It was but a bitter memory of a sad story I once heard, that caused this apparent reluctance! Your hand! I swear to protect your daughter — even Rose — from the touch of harm, from the wiles of the seducer, the arts of the libertine!"

And while the old man grasped the hand of this unknown comrade, whom we have heard addressed by the names of Walter and Reginald, there, half buried in the shadows, stood the Lady Marion, her face overspread with smiles, the light of a strange passion flashing from her eyes!

CHAPTER SECOND.

ROSE.

The moon, rising over yonder precipitous ascent of woods, shines down upon the cottage home of Michael, the hunter.

So, perchance, a thousand years ago she shone, when these trees encircled mansions of marble; when the banners of a strange and forgotten people fluttered in a summer air, as bland as the breeze which now makes music among the leaves; when, beside these waters, grouped the Priests and the white-robed maidens, swelling into the deep vault of heaven, their sacrificial song!

Walter advanced from the shadows of the trees, and stood upon a rock that towers there at this hour; his dark attire and pale face, disclosed in the light of the rising moon. You see his face upraised, its pale hue giving unnatural radiance to his clear dark eye; you perceive the traces of tears upon that bold cheek, and yet the resolve of a strong will speaks in that firm mouth and rounded chin.

It was a very beautiful sight that he saw, by the pale light of the moon. Not a palace of

white marble, nor yet one of those red brick mansions which freeze the soul out of you, with their bright pink walls and green window-shutters; but a little structure of wood and stone, nestling between two huge rocks. How the vines waved and the flowers bloomed upon those grey old piles of granite! It was but a little structure, with a single window, and a steep roof that sheltered from the sun and rain three little rooms; but, for all that, it was a "home."

A home, with trees on trees around. above it; a home, with a still stream flowing gently by; a home, with a garden spreading from its door down to the water's edge; a home, with roof of boards and straw, hidden by leaves and fragrant with honeysuckles; a home, containing a treasure more precious than the gold of Mexico, or the diamonds of Hindoostan!

That treasure — an immortal soul — locked up within the body of a beautiful and sinless girl!

Walter stood gazing upon it, wrapped in his thoughts, when a footstep resounded by his side.

He turned, and beheld the form of a negro, his white eyeballs and ivory teeth shining from a face as black as ink and glossy as silk. He stood there, six feet high in his boots, his broad chest enveloped in a green coat, faced with gold; his thick wool surmounted by a cap of dark fur; his limbs encased in long boots, that shone like mirrors. Altogether, he was as fine a specimen of the African, with his flat nose, big lips, and protruding eyes, as you might see in any court of justice, on the occasion of the trial of a fugitive slave. It may also be remarked, that the muzzles of two silver mounted pistols protruded from the breast of his dark green coat.

"I is here, Massa!" said the dark gentleman, with a bow that would have done honor to a courtier of Versailles.

"Ah! is that you, Bram?"

"It am de rale nigga Massa"!

"Is everything ready? You remember my orders! First, the Purple Chamber, in my city mansion, was to be prepared for my reception: — have you obeyed my commands?"

"Y-e-s, Massa!"

'At twelve o'clock to-night, the carriage is to be waiting, in the narrow lane, beyond the Wissahikon, about half a mile from this place."

"It will be dar!"

"Bram, you must not express any surprise in case a young gentleman, somewhat slender in form, and clad in a plain dark dress, should appear at twelve to-night, and enter the carriage! The moment he enters, you will drive with all speed to the city, and lead this young gentleman up stairs into the Purple Chamber."

"Dis nigga nebbaw fails to do dat which Massa commands. No, he does not, dat he don't!"

"The young gentleman will be known to you, not so much by his dress, as by the white scarf which binds his eyes —"

"De grashus goodness! Blinefold, eh? Bress a poor darkey's stars! Dat reminds me of Paris. A berry fine place is Paris, only dem folks do talk so partiklar queer. And den dey aint got no common sense! Laws! dey treats a dark brown colored gemman just like a white person, widout de 'propriate distinction ob color!"

"You have heard my commands. Remember, the happiness — perchance, the life — of your master depends upon the manner in which you follow them. Go!"

Without a word the liveried negro disappeared, and was lost to view among the trees.

We will now watch the movements of Walter with peculiar interest.

Descending from the rock, he draws forth from among the bushes, which dip from the bank into the waves, an Indian canoe, hewn by the hands of old Michael from the trunk of a massive tree.

You see him enter the canoe; he stands erect, in the light of the moon, his pale face betraying unequivocal signs of emotion. One movement of the slender oar, and the fragile barge glides noiselessly over the waters, and rests beside the opposite shore.

Walter leaps upon the bank. He stands in the garden, which blooms along the level space. He listens! All is still; the clear moonlight falls upon the latticed window of the cottage, but reveals no traces of the presence of any human thing within its walls.

He advances toward the door, his heart beating quicker, his strong frame trembling in every nerve. Still no sound!

His hand is upon the wooden latch — for a moment he pauses in painful suspense — he crosses the threshold of that home.

All is silent there. Through the small window, a belt of moonlight falls along the outer floor. All beside is dark.

Through that darkened room, Walter moves with noiseless footsteps and extended hands.

A sob, low and gushing, as if arising from the heart, disturbs the silence. At the same moment, his hand touches a woman's cheek, and feels her tears.

"Rose!"

All is dark; he cannot see her, yet a small hand is laid within his own, and a face is pressed against his bosom.

"You are unhappy! You weep ——"

There was no reply; not in words, yet the hand that was pressed within his own — the young face, resting on his bosom — spoke that universal language which Love first learned in Paradise.

In a moment, Walter gently disengaged her arm from his neck, hurried into the next chamber, and returned, bearing a light in his hands.

Then it might be seen that the Rose of Wissahikon was transcendantly beautiful!

She bloomed in one corner of the small room, her form resting upon a huge old armchair, fashioned of solid oak. Her cheek upon her hand; her eyes upraised, she shone through the chamber like an angel presence.

You would pardon this extravagance of speech, had you but for a moment seen her in her virgin beauty.

True, the dress which enveloped her young form, was of the plainest and coarsest material; true, her foot was encased in a rude shoe, made of rough buckskin; true, her bosom was veiled by a plain white kerchief, and yet, for all her simple dress, her beauty shone out and lighted that small chamber of the forest home.

That foot, seen below the coarse skirt, was so small; that bosom, heaving beneath the white kerchief, so round and full; those arms, bare from the shoulder, so like arms of alabaster, rounded by the chisel of an inspired sculptor, veined by delicate threads of azure, softened by a flush like the first glow of a summer morn; that face, so fair in its hue, so warm in the lips, so brilliant in the eyes, so beautifully relieved by the rich mass of dark brown hair!

Her eyes were neither blue, nor hazel, nor black. Now dark, now bright, now slowly lighting up with emotion; now flashing into sudden radiance; now gleaming dimly through the half-closed lids; now overspread with moisture — even as the stars look more beautiful through the tears of an April shower; those eyes, always in every phase of expression, sent their rays home to the heart!

The hair was brown, and yet, in one light, it was black as the deep vault of a midnight sky; in another, purple as the last kiss of day upon the western horizon. The word auburn, expressing that delicious combination of colors which imparts such divine beauty to the hair of a lovely woman, comes nearer the truth.

Her eyes full of clear, deep light: her skin white as marble, with the young blood speaking out in each cheek; her hair auburn in hue and plainly gathered back from her face — just as the painters have pictured our Mother Mary, so bloomed this young girl in that cottage chamber.

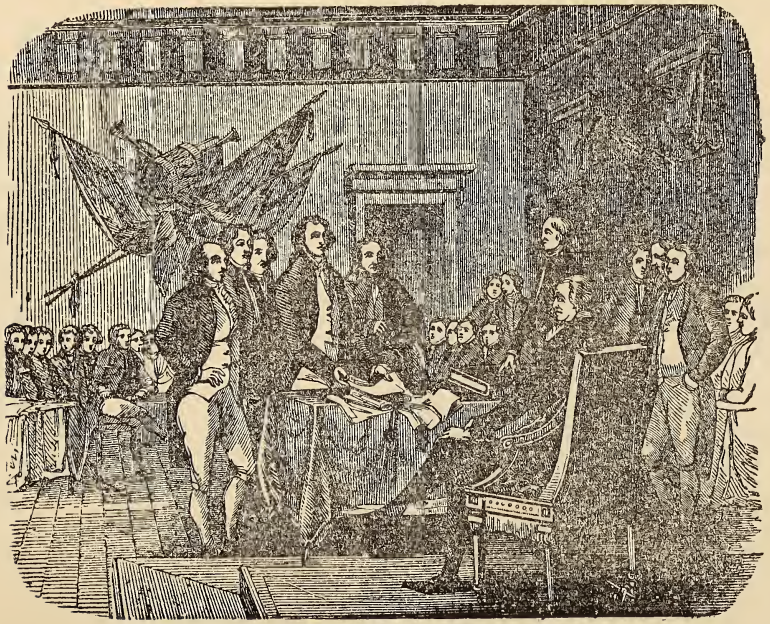
Her hair was bound in a coil at the back of her head, and yet the band which clasped it, once untied, it covered her — the neck, the bosom and the form, which would have been voluptuous, had not the eyes been so pure — it covered her like a veil, that beautiful flowing hair.

Walter stood on the threshold, surveying in silent admiration this lovely girl. The same light that reveals his form, clad in a hunting garb of dark velvet, shines upon the young maiden with the light kerchief around her neck, the dark skirt upon her form.

Her eyes, dim with tears, encountered his earnest gaze.

Shall we translate the thought which gave such a deep melancholy to his face?

"A miracle? This young and beautiful girl reared alone in these woods from her earliest infancy! her only companion an old man, who is now rough as any forester in his speech, and again in the very writhings of remorse betrays the eloquence of the forum, the refinement of courtly life! Reared alone — a beautiful flower blooming in the desert — the light of genius shines from the eyes, the glow of edu-



THE COMMITTEE PRESENTING THE DECLARATION.

cation warms her face. That hand can fill the canvass with flowers and forms as beautiful as those seen in a midsummer dream — or pour forth, on paper, thoughts that indicate at once the tenderness of woman, the power of genius! And yet she knows the world from books alone — its cares, its customs are to her but the dim phantoms of a day-break dream.

So ran his thoughts, but before him ever rose one question that poisoned the serenity of his soul: — "*Is yours the hand to tear from the vase, in which it blooms, this flower, so pure, so virgin? Is yours the heart to plan the shame of that chaste being, the dishonor of that maiden soul?*"

"Rose," he said aloud, advancing to the maiden, "to-night you will leave your home. All is arranged. To-night you will link your fate with mine! Why do you weep? Is it because you dread the coming of that hour, when gathering you to my heart, I shall whisper: *Rose, you are mine!*"

She slowly arose from the chair, and laid her hands upon his arms.

"But a month since we met, and I am about to leave father and home for you! Only a few short weeks ago I beheld you, for the first time, standing at the banks of the Wissahikon, and now, for you, Arthur — for you, I am about to leave this dear home for ever!"

The language, which spoke from her upraised eyes, was an hundred times more powerful than her words.

Walter, Reginald, Arthur? At all events, the young hunter is rich in names.

"But the Home, to which I will lead you, Rose —"

"A cottage like this, in a dear, secluded valley, with such green woods above us, such a quiet stream rippling by the door! Say, is't not so, Arthur? You wish a home like this? There we will dwell together, and after your day's toil in the woods — for you are but a poor hunter, Arthur — we will sit together by the fireside of home, our faces glowing in the same hallowed light!"

Arthur smiled, perchance, at the earnestness of her eyes, the simple pathos of her voice.

"The Purple Chamber!" he murmured, and bent his eyes upon her glowing face.

"But my father, Arthur! he will come and visit us. Ah, why must we meet without his knowledge — why this secresy? This mystery."

She buried her face upon his breast, and as he looked down upon her glossy tresses, a dark and ominous frown, gathered upon his brow. Ah, Walter, Reginald, Arthur, what means that frown? Does the thought of your secret meetings, for this month past — that history which you were about to tell old Michael, the hunter — cross your soul? And now, old Michael, and the father of this girl, are ONE, and you dare not breathe the knowledge of this fact to the maid, who throbs upon your bosom, her heart pulsating with a holy, a virgin love?

Remember your Oath!

"But why need we leave Wissahikon?" she cried with a radiant smile upon her face; "Why leave this place, where the dawn is so lovely, the noon-day so serene, the twilight so holy? Not a path, in these dear woods, but we have trod together — I clad in the hunter's dress, which you brought me — while you with your rifle to your shoulder, pointed out each beautiful view; here, a delightful glimpse of water; there, a cool cascade dashing over grey rocks, or, far away, the Wissahikon, shining like a golden track of light in the setting sun! And those beautiful bowers in the forest, Arthur, where there are vines blooming with honeysuckles, and lillies wreathing their white cups with the leaves of the rose, and the air breathe perfume, and the lull of the distant stream comes on the air like sweet music from Heaven! O, I have passed such happy years in this dear solitude — my father so kind, so good! Yes, kind, for all he leaves me alone for a month, every year; good for all that he mutters to himself and writhes in agony in the long hours of the night, and wanders out in the storm, his head and breast bared to the blast! And we must leave it all, Arthur, to-night, we must say to all that is beautiful here, Farewell!"

She stood in her blushing beauty before her lover, in that plain room. The sanded floor: the white-washed walls, adorned with the works of her pencil; the grotesquely carved table, on which her books — her Bible among the rest — were placed; the hearth, now

wreathed with roses and laurel; the low ceiling, supported by heavy rafters — such were the details of the picture.

In the centre stood the tall form of the lover, his dark dress imparting additional paleness to his face; his right arm holding the light above his head, and before him her eyes upraised, her heart beating warmly beneath her kerchief, the young girl blushed like a rose, trembling on its stem to a gentle breeze.

"Do you love me?" he said, bending upon her face the full light of his eyes.

You should have seen her clear skin slowly ripening from her bosom to the brow, from the shoulders to the fingers, in all the crimson of her virgin blood! What woman ever lived, who could hear without a quivering pulse those words spoken by dark eyes, burning with light, at the same instant they are spoken by a voice that trembles between a whisper and a sigh, those words, "Do you love me?"

Poor Rose!

Just as you have seen a humming bird beat its rainbow wings against the scarf that lightly enveloped it, so her heart beat in her bosom, imparting its fire to her cheek and eyes!

How it was she knew not, but she seemed to grow toward her lover's form, her head sought his shoulder as a pillow, the band that tied her hair parted, and down it fell, that flowing hair, down it streamed, so glossy and so beautiful in its hues, now brown, now black, now purple, that waving auburn hair.

And then as the lids of her eyes half closed, her lips parted until her white teeth were seen — a line of ivory, set in vermilion!

Arthur bent gently down, and, for the first time, suffered his breath to mingle with hers, as their lips throbbed together and mingle in that signet of a deathless love!

The first kiss!

"To-night, at twelve, remember!" he said — not in a calm, even voice, you may be sure. "To-night, in your hunter's dress, at twelve, remember!" and hurried from the room.

When she came to the door, she beheld him standing on the opposite shore, the summer moon pouring its rays upon his uncovered brow. Between them rippled the stream — around and above fluttered the sea of leaves, and from afar came the plaintive song of the whippoor-will. He stood on the very rock, where she first beheld him a month gone by

He flung a kiss to her as she stood in the cottage door; a warm picture in a rude frame.

Again that word, "Remember!" and he was gone.

Rose looked upon the vacant rock for many minutes, and then entered her home, closing the door.

In fifteen minutes there came from the cottage door a young hunter, clad in a dress which was at once singularly neat and picturesque. A gray frock, that fell open, disclosing the buff waistcoat buttoned to the chin and descending below the waist. Breeches of the same color, tied at the knee, where a buckskin boot revealed the shape of the leg. Upon his dark hair, which was very glossy and luxuriant, he wore a delicate cap, topped with a dainty white plume.

It must be confessed that there were some objections to the general harmony of the costume. For example, the waistcoat was drawn tightly over the bust, while it fell in wrinkles about the waist, and the boot, small as it was, was too large for the hunter's foot, and the sleeves tightened about the arms until they revealed a firm, round outline.

That hunter came stepping along the garden with a kind of stealthy grace, and started back with a somewhat beautiful surprise, as he beheld his warm cheeks and light eyes reflected in the calm mirror of Wissahikon!

Beautiful Rose of Wissahikon!

"The words of this strange woman, Lady Marion, bewilder me! Ah, I *have* a secret — yes, there is one thing which I have not told to Arthur! What a strange, dark story seemed upon this lady's tongue, and yet she seemed afraid to tell it! Yet, her parting words I remember well: —'*If you have a brother on this side of Eternity, come to my house to-night and I will show you his image, and reveal to you the very scene in which he is placed, at the moment you look upon his image!*' How could she guess this yearning desire of my heart, to see that brother of whom my father has often spoken in his moments of agony! I will go to her home, I will dare worse perils than she described, but to have one glance at MY BROTHER'S FORM!"

Yes, she had a secret, which she kept locked within her own bosom. Even from the lover, to whom she entrusted her soul, she kept it, not from any impure motive, but — it may be — that with all her purity and beauty, she was so far a daughter of Eve, as to desire the possession of one secret, only one. Then what a delightful surprise she meditated for her lover, when pressing her new found brother in her arms, she could say ; Brother, this is Arthur !

Look upon her, as she enters the canoe and glides down the stream. Gently, softly over the tide, the moon upon her face, the boughs stretching out their arms to embrace her !

She goes to meet the Lady Marion. In the summer time I have seen a beautiful green snake, spotted with drops of gold, coiling himself quietly under a rosebush, while a humming bird, green and gold in his soft plumage, hovered near, and near and nearer, until the snake disclosed his fangs, and —

But why this dark presentiment ?

Gently, softly over the tide the boat bore Rose along, while the ripples broke in music on the shore.

The idea of a girl living for sixteen years in the solitude of the Wissahikon, her only companion a rough old man, who, with all his rudeness, teaches her those arts which develope genius and soften the life of a woman, even as the last flash of a rainbow mellows the sky !

Very ridiculous, is it not, my dear lover of common place, my dear matter of fact ?

And yet it is very beautiful ; yes, even if a fiction, it is worth all your hard-featured, stony-eyed Truth !

But it is Truth. Not Truth, shining with a bloody glare over the scenes of a battle, or growing drowsy with the miasma of a great city's crimes, but Truth as beautiful as the Wissahikon, and as pure.

CHAPTER THIRD.

WASHINGTON, THE KING.

The house of the Lady Marion stood alone on the heights of Wissahikon.

It was a substantial structure of stone, facing toward the south, its massive front presenting one imposing surface, while on either side, a semi-circular wing increased its picturesque effect. Its steep roof arose in many Gothic shapes, crowned with fantastic chimneys and bordered by heavy cornices along the eaves.

Above those roofs a grove of horse chestnut trees extended their grateful shade : their broad green leaves, their substantial trunks were contrasted with the bright verdure of the sward, the rich brown of the gravelled walks, the dark gray of the stone.

On the right of the mansion, from among a copse of hazel, the roof of a small summer house, or pavilion, burst into light. This elegant structure contained but a single room, furnished in a strange, antique style.

Two winding carriage roads led from the front of the mansion, under the grove of horse chestnut trees, along a wide lawn that extended for some three hundred yards, until it was terminated by the green hedge-row of a shadowy lane.

Behind the mansion sank the wild declivity of Wissahikon, trees and rocks, sweeps of sward, growths of under-wood, gentle elevations and green hollows, all mingled together.

The mansion contained many chambers, all furnished in contrasted style ; many passages, some hollowed from the thick wall, some winding like a serpent's track, some extending broad and deep along the entire extent of the edifice

It is with three apartments in this mansion that our history on the night of July the third, between the hours of ten and twelve, is connected. The pavilion among the hazel trees has also a deep interest for us. Almost at the same time, in the east and in the west wing, in the pavilion and in the banquetting room of Lady Marion's house, scenes of vital interest are in progress.

Time had been, when gay equipages, bearing the forms of gallant men and beautiful women, had rolled along the lawn, when noble steeds stood champing the bit before the door, when every window and crevice of the mansion poured out its separate stream of light, and the entire grove blazed in every leaf, with a radiance like day.

Then the sound of woman's laughter, the tread of woman's foot bounding in the dance, mingled with the clatter of goblets and the music of a full band. Until the morning dawned, the Wissahikon rung with the sounds of revelry and the old forest thrilled with the

clamor of a mad festival. The pavilion, too, shrouded in its copse of hazel, witnessed many a coy meeting, many a scene in which the young maiden, fluttering in satin and brilliant with diamonds, her blood thrilling with the dance and wine, heard with crimsoned cheek and panting bosom the tremulous story, warm from the lips of passion.

But now all was dark. Dark the mansion in its many chambers; dark the pavilion in its solitary room; dark the woods in its tangled mazes and winding paths. Not a gleam of light, from pavilion or mansion, illumined the midnight shadows of the grove.

And yet, had you taken your position by the large tree, that towers before the door, and watched from dark until midnight, you might have seen many strange guests enter the room. Let us, within the shadows of the grove, wait patiently and behold them as they come.

The Lady Marion, with old Michael by her side! It is but dusk; they come from the woods of Wissahikon, and silently enter the hall door.

An hour passes — what have we here? A multitude of forms, shrouded, although it is summer time, in cloaks, with scabbards rattling underneath. They have left their horses in yonder grove, hidden by the leaves. One by one they enter the mansion; twenty forms in all, treading with the step of young manhood over the gravelled walks.

Another hour! A solitary figure, dressed in a dark habit, appears, glances cautiously around and is gone into the mansion. As he turns his face, we may almost recognize the features of Arthur, Walter or Reginald, as you may please to call him.

Silence again; an half hour passes, and an old man, whose dark attire flashes with lace of gold, steps from the shadows and enters the house of Lady Marion.

Then the form of a young hunter came hurriedly from the wood in the rear of the house, and, without turning to right or left, glided within the hazel copse which overshadowed the pavilion.

Poor Rose of Wissahikon!

You will confess that these movements, this strangely contrasted crowd of guests, all, save one, entering the house of Lady Marion, the mystery which envelopes their actions, the secrecy with which they move — fills us with surprise, with awe.

Between the hours of ten and twelve we will enter the mansion and behold, in three separate chambers, scenes of absorbing interest. Then our steps will wander to yonder pavilion, and, with hushed breath and earnest gaze, we will witness a scene that exceeds them all, not only in its deep interest, but in its strange disclosures.

First, let the curtain roll back from the Banquetting Chamber —

What do we see? No goblets of wine? No wreaths of flowers? The light of six wax candles, placed in candlesticks of silver, reveals the wainscotted walls of that wide chamber, which traverses the mansion from north to south. At the southern end a black curtain, drooping from the ceiling to the floor, closes the view.

Around a long table, covered with a dark cloth, the strange guests are assembled. No service of silver, nor goblets or plates of gold, nor anything that betokens a festival, do we behold.

A sword gleams from the dark cloth of that table; beside it, letters, papers, parchments, bearing the signatures of such men as Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, George Washington and John Hancock, are placed.

Do you behold the scene? Those twenty men, all young, with athletic forms and earnest brows, seated around the table — their forms brilliant with warrior costume, every man with his sword unsheathed upon his knee, while his eye is centered upon that erect figure at the head of the board!

These are the chivalry of the state and continent; young men with wealth at their beck, true hearts, who never yet having shared in council or battle, beat with fiery impatience to do some service to their native land.

And at the head of the table, in a uniform of dark green, faced with gold, stood Walter, the hunter, his pale, olive cheek, now glowing with strong emotion; his dark eye, flashing a fire that sent its rays to every heart.

He stood erect, glancing with conscious pride upon these brave men, who have hailed him Leader.

His eye glances along the board; he searchingly surveys those faces. Not a brow but wears its faith, like a signet upon its surface; not an eye but flashed with answering fire to his own.

In that clear deep voice which warms the blood to hear, he condenses the deliberations of hours in a few bold words.

"The time has come for action. The country — the land which bore us, and which God has given to the free — calls to us for deliverance! Not merely from the sceptre of George III., but from the wiles of faction — the tricks of anarchists! For days the Congress, sitting in the old Statehouse, has held its secret session! For days with closed doors, and all the indications of mystery, it has pursued its deliberations! To what purpose do these mysterious councils tend? Witness the intercepted letters of its leaders, now spread before you on the table — witness the signatures of Hancock, and Jefferson, and Adams! They would flood the land with blood, not to accomplish its freedom, but to establish on the ruins of the British power the miserable anarchy of a Venitian Senate. They would pour armies forth on the battle field, not so much to crush King George, as to crush George Washington!"

He paused, while his flashing eye ran round the throng, as if eager to gather the purpose of men's hearts from their faces.

No shout, but a deep murmur pervaded that banquet chamber. From their muttered whispers, we may gain some knowledge of the object of this council.

"Jefferson plans the overthrow of Washington!"

"Hancock would restore us to the sway of the British King!"

"The proofs are there — letters signed by them, and plotting treason!"

"Even Washington writes to this patriotic lady — the brave woman who has so mysteriously summoned us together — writes from his camp, and reveals the treachery of Congress!"

"We must surround their doors, and scatter their deliberations to the winds!"

"Ay, sword in hand, my friends! For the sword is your only cure for the tricks of traitors!"

And twenty extended hands held their good swords in the light.

At the same moment, from opposite sides of the dark curtain, a face was thrust into view, and as suddenly withdrawn again. This, the scarred visage of Michael the Hunter; that, the beautiful face of Lady Marion.

It must be confessed that as Walter stood erect in the presence of his comrades, his marked countenance glaring with the fire of his sworn resolve, he looked, in every inch of his form, the soldier and the hero.

"For the assassin there is a gibbet; for the traitor, the sword! To-night, brothers in the good cause — to-night, a committee, appointed by Congress to put their mysterious deliberations into shape, held their council in the city. Jefferson, Adams, Sherman, and Livingston, are that committee, selected to fulfil the dark work of Congress.

"Lured, either by the hope of titles from the King, in case they betray the country into his hands; or ambitious of positions of power and trust in case they establish an aristocratic anarchy, like the Republic of Venice — these men have determined the overthrow of Washington. We must trample their schemes into dust! Desperate crimes require desperate remedies! We must surround the house in which these traitors hold their councils — encompass every avenue — encircle the room in which they plan their treachery — and, at the points of our swords force from their grasp the proofs of their treachery! Ay, we must do it! and before the clock strikes twelve! Then, with the traitors in our power, we will unfurl our flag to the morning light, call the generous spirits of the camp and council to our aid, and from the Statehouse hall, proclaim the name under which we rally — the name under which we will fight — the name under which we will conquer, with us — WASHINGTON, THE KING!"

He paused, and a silence like the grave pervaded that hall. From side to side, the comrades turned, seeking from each other's faces some explanation of this bold movement. The light of the wax candles flashed along the wainscotted walls, and over the dark curtain. Still, that singular silence prevailed. His brow flushed with emotion, Walter sank in his chair,

while only the sound of deep-drawn breath disturbed the stillness of the scene.

Slowly — slowly the curtain rolled aside. From its folds, in all her beauty, her voluptuous form attired in a dark habit, stepped forth the Lady Marion, with the form of rough Michael, armed with his rifle, by her side.

"Behold!" and she pointed to an object, disclosed by the parting of the curtain.

"For *that* I will fight!" cried old Michael, waving his rifle toward the object.

At once a shout, like thunder, echoed along that banquet chamber; at once twenty forms started to their feet, and twenty swords described their circles in the air.

You see their faces, glowing with enthusiasm; you behold Walter turn and echo their shout; while the Lady Marion glides to his side, presses his hands within her own, pours the passion of her heaving breast into her dark eyes, and whispers — "Reginald, you have done well!"

And there, disclosed by the curtains, stood the portrait of a warrior, whose tall form and majestic face seemed about to start from the canvass, and glide among the guests, and speak to them. A form, such as kings never owned — an eye, that gleamed its soul from a chivalric face; a hand, that grasped its own true sword.

There was a crown upon that noble brow.

And louder through the banquet chamber — while the Lady Marion, her olive cheek blooming with passion and triumph, glided closer to Walter's side — louder swelled the shout

"WASHINGTON, THE KING!"

CHAPTER FOURTH.

LADY MARION'S KISS.

IN the crescent-shaped room of the east wing, sat an aged man, bending over a table overspread with manuscripts, the light of a solitary candle upon his withered brow.

He sat in a capacious arm-chair, his slender form attired in a dark coat, adorned by lace and buttons of gold; while his cambric ruffles were relieved by a long waistcoat of black velvet.

His hair, white with age, was plainly gathered back from his face His entire appearance denoted wealth and station; his high and somewhat narrow forehead, deep gray eyes, and mouth relaxing in a calm smile. betrayed the indications of an enthusiastic nature, whose fire neither the touch of sorrow nor the frosts of age could chill.

The semi-circular room was elegantly hung with tapestry of dark purple; the carpet displayed a soft and rich combination of colors; the ceiling rising in a dome, blushed with the delicate tints of the dawn. Altogether, it was a perfect gem of a chamber, worthy of the luxurious taste of Lady Marion.

The old man was bent over the table, quietly reading by the light of the lamp, while — as he passed from paper to paper, from letter to letter — his withered face gradually lighted up, and his eye began, by slow degrees, to burn with the fire of youth.

For the letters that he read, were the letters of love — the first warm breathings of a heart, now cold forever; written by a hand that long ago was dust!

The tears fell from the old man's eyes. He placed the letters in his bosom. Then, he unrolled a huge manuscript, bearing on its cover the words — "Journal of John Landsdowne."

Here, written in a fair, clear hand, there, blotted by tears, again, stained with blood, the journal covered a space of twenty years.

But what love and adventures, heroism and murder, were comprised in that history of twenty years!

The old man read with a flushed cheek, an eye all fire, a heart that writhed within him.

At last as he came to the history of that AWFUL NIGHT, written by the hand of the murderer himself, the bloody record dropped from his hand, and he buried his face in his hands.

"And yet he was a brother!" he gasped. "Two weeks ago, standing within the shadow of the ruins of the blasted house, I discovered the fearful history in *her* grave!

"It was the hand of God that guided me there; the same hand leads me to the valley of the Wissahikon!"

A shadow fell along the floor, by his side. Do you see that proud form, standing upon the threshold — that countenance stamped with an expression that contracts the brows, while it parts the red lips in a smile?

It is the Lady Marion; she advances and lays her hand upon the old man's shoulder

"Ah, is it you, Lady Marion?" he said, raising his eyes. "Little did I think a year ago, when I encountered you, the brightest among the beauties — nay, do not smile, 'tis but an old man's compliment! — the brightest among the beauties who surround the throne of King George, that I should ever find you here, living in retirement, among the woods of Wissahikon! You was then known as the 'American beauty,' who had given her hand to Sir George Ferrers. Pardon! if my words raise an unpleasant feeling. Sir George died shortly after I saw you at Court. And then, with a heroism worthy of a Spartan woman, you resolved to return to your native land, eager to share the perils of freedom rather than bask in the sunshine of a royal court. Much less did I then imagine that through your agency, I should one day recover my lost daughter —"

"Yesterday, in the city, you placed those papers in my hands; and I told you where your child was hidden. You were also in search of your nephew, Reginald Landsdowne, of St. Leonard ——"

"I bear in my hand his credentials as Delegate from his State, to the Continental Congress. He has been strange — mysterious in his movements for the past year. Heir to an immense estate — in fact, the actual possessor — with talents and genius that fit him to shine, even in the Congress, where so many great men are gathered, he has buried himself from society for nearly a year. Eh! eccentric? your looks seems to say."

"To-morrow you shall clasp your daughter to your arms; to-morrow you shall present these credentials to Reginald Landsdowne, of St. Leonard's ——"

"Why not to-night?" and the old man's countenance betrayed an overwhelming anxiety.

"Do not ask my reasons!" Her smile was accompanied with one of those glances of her full dark eyes, that flashed but to conquer. "To-morrow, all will be right! To-morrow, all my little plans — ha, ha! you see I have a true woman's taste for mystery — will be fulfilled!"

Thus speaking, she left the room, while the old man bent down to his papers again.

"All would be well," he muttered, "if I could only find my lost son! But it is asking too much of Heaven. And yet my researches into his history, from the moment when, but a child, he was torn from his dead mother's side —— Well, well! to-morrow will decide all!"

"To-morrow!" triumphantly echoed Lady Marion, as she hurried along the corridor and down the stairs. "Ha, ha! to-morrow!"

She stood in front of the old mansion. on the stone steps leading to the hall door. In silence, twenty horsemen awaited there — their steeds grouped round the walk — their scabbards seen from beneath the folds of their cloaks.

A single horse wheeled from the throng, and his rider, bending over the neck of the impatient steed, removed his chapeau from his pale brow.

"Lady Marion, I go to serve my country!" he whispered.

She advanced, and standing on the steps of stone, extended her hands! Ah! how that pressure fired the leader's blood! Bending down over the neck of his steed, he — imperceptibly — wound his arms about her neck, and felt her cheek against his own, her heart throbbing through her voluptuous bosom.

"If I am successful ——" he whispered.

"Return successful," — a soft voice breathed the words upon his lips, and sealed them with a kiss — "and Reginald Landsdowne, I am yours!"

The sounds rose in the light, and twenty horses darted away, bearing their gallant and chivalrous riders toward the city. Away, through the trees, and along the lawn, faint and fainter, the sound of the hoofs, the clattering of scabbards, died on the ear.

The figure of a man advanced from the grove, and stood beside Lady Marion. So utterly absorbed was this woman in the emotion resulting from her dark schemes, that she did not notice the presence of the stranger, until after the lapse of a few moments.

"Ah! Michael, is it you?" she said at last. "Take horse, and away; do not lose a moment. While these gentlemen surround the Committee, you must secure the person of President Hancock! Do not return to your home; I will take care that your daughter shall not wonder at your absence! Away!"

"For Washington!" the bluff old hunter muttered, as he hurried from the hall.

The Lady Marion stood wrapt in thought.

"He loves her, with a pure passion, and would dishonor her! Me, he loves, with a passion born of madness; — I can sway him as I will. For me, he will dishonor his name and betray his country! Ha, ha!"

Bewitching Lady Marion!

CHAPTER FIFTH.

LADY MARION'S TEAR.

It was the bower of a beautiful woman.

Three windows, curtained with folds of pale crimson silk, mirrors between each window, reaching from the ceiling to the floor, so that the lovely woman who occupies it, might see a lovely lady like herself whichever way she turned; a luxurious sofa, cushioned with velvet, and an arm-chair whose capacious back her head might rest upon as a pillow — it was the very Temple in which a proud and haughty woman might retire and worship her own beauty.

And yet strange to say, the small lamp which hung from the dome-like ceiling, did not reveal the form of a lovely woman.

No! Beside a small writing-desk, scattered all over with papers, stood an uncouth figure, broad in the shoulders, attired in a rugged dress, with heavy boots, and a mask of faded crape over his face.

It was the Outcast who had attacked Lady Marion in the woods; the robber who had despoiled her bosom of its chain and jewel; the assassin who had prepared for his work of force by tampering with the hunter's rifle.

Wo! to the proud woman, if in her most secret retreat she encounters this outcast, with crape upon his face and pistols in his belt!

He bent over the table, reading with a low chuckle of delight a letter which the hand of Lady Marion had traced. Looking over his shoulder, we may discover words like these:

To the General commanding his Majesty's forces in America —

Ere you receive this, you will have learned that the prominent members of the Rebel Congress have been seized and made prisoners, by certain gentlemen who have proclaimed George Washington, the Rebel General, KING. At this hour, Hancock, Jefferson, Adams, with other Delegates, are prisoners at my house, near Philadelphia. Thus have we introduced dissension among the ranks of the rebels; while one party prate about a republic, another talk of returning to their allegiance, and a third — I know your excellency will smile — prate of KING WASHINGTON. How this has been accomplished will be made known at the proper time. Enough to say, that this Declaration, about which they whispered so deeply, for a month back, this Proclamation of Independence, is now crushed — quite forgotten in the public clamor. Permit me to hope, that in announcing these facts to his Majesty, you will neither forget the services, nor promised reward of

MARION.

THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1776.

"Ha, ha! draft of a letter to be sent in cypher —" muttered the Outcast — "The good lady anticipates — she may fail —"

"She cannot fail," said a deep voice, and Lady Marion stood beside him.

Does the Outcast dart upon her, with the upraised knife, and menace her beauty with the violence, the outrage of a bravo and ruffian?

No! He stands for a moment, as if contemplating the singular beauty of her face, the eloquence of her eye, the passion of her swelling bust, her majestic form. Then tearing the cap from his brow, the crape from his face, the rough costume from his form, he stands before us, a young gentleman, slender in figure, clad in a gay British uniform, with light curls of golden hair waving about his florid face.

"Tolerably well done: that robber scene! Eh — sis?" he exclaimed, with that air of quiet composure — some call it impudence — which alike distinguishes the fine city gentleman and the supremely fine city blackguard — "The poor devil did not imagine that we got up that little piece of tragedy for his benefit! I've quite a good opinion of myself in private theatricals!"

He flung his delicate form upon the sofa, and turned towards the light a face marked by the cold, dead eyes of satiety, the unmeaning lip and vacant stare of dissolute indulgence.

"All is safe," his sister exclaimed, pacing the room — "Confusion in the camp of the Rebels — Reginald Landsdowne in my power —"

"Sis, do you really love that man?" — you can see the sneer upon the face of that finished man of the world — "Beyond your ambitious schemes — your title and your promised power, do you care for him? pale-faced, melancholy Don Quixotte that he is?"

The brother was frightened by his sister's look.

"Do I care for him? Why have I deserted the glare and splendor of the British Court, for this dark path of treachery and intrigue? Why coined my soul into desperate deeds, in order to combine men of various interests into one great enterprise? Why all this mystery, this craft, yes, I will say it, this crime? Do I love him? One year ago, I beheld that pale, melancholy face, standing out from among the shallow-visaged courtiers; I felt the light of those deep, earnest eyes, and from that hour loved Reginald Landsdowne! Yes, all my schemes shall — must end, in placing a coronet upon his brow, the title of Earl before his name! Love him? 'Tis of such men, kings are made!"

Pacing over the carpet, she clenched her hands upon her bosom, while her eyes flashed that singular and peculiar light, which made her look like a beautiful Demon.

"But you forget my part of the bargain, sis —" cried the brother, assuming an easier position on the sofa — "I forged those papers, bearing the signatures of Jefferson and the other rebels. I aided your schemes. I have made myself shockingly disgusting to look upon, for your sake. Now comes my reward. The Rose of Wissahikon yesterday was but a poor peasant maid. Now, she is the heiress of some sweet lands, and delicious stores of gold. Your dear brother is in want of lands and gold, and is willing to take a wife into the bargain. What need of a long courtship, when —"

"Pshaw! Need you make me the partner of your schemes?" — she paused before him, her eyes flashing scorn — "go! if you have your plan arranged, go and execute it! Tell not to me your schemes — for with all my ambition, Gerald — with all the feverish thirst of power — I am a woman!"

For once she blushed. Yes, blushed, over the neck and cheeks and brow, while her head fell slowly on her bosom. The youthful gentleman, whose dead eyes and colorless lips and florid cheeks, betrayed a premature old age, surveyed his magnificent sister with a glance of surprise. All that Heaven had bestowed of the Man, upon this darling of vice, had long ago dribbled out from his veins, leaving his heart as cold as his leaden eye. He could not comprehend the remorse of his sister.

"Go!" she cried, as that pure impulse of her woman's nature again bathed her cheek and brow with crimson. "The anguish of the father, to-morrow, when he learns his daughter's fate — the curse of Reginald when he learns her shame — these will be hard to bear, aye more dangerous than the knife or rifle of old Michael, the hunter."

"I will arrange this little matter," said Gerald Moynton, as he pushed negligently aside his golden curls — "excuse me, sis, for a young lady is anxiously waiting to "*see her lost brother!*"

He lounged languidly from the room, leaving Lady Marion alone, her arms clasped across her bosom, her head bowed low. In vain that pressure of the clasped hands; it could not still the volcano of contending passions, raging within the breast. In vain that drooping of the head; it could not hide the shadow of the face, the quivering of the lip, the eye gleaming with one, only one drop of pity.

Blessed be Heaven for that solitary tear.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

WAYANIKO.

In the darkness of the summer house, Rose awaited the coming of the Astrologer, who was to disclose her brother's face.

The windows of the solitary room were closed, not the ray of a star, or the gleam of a taper, found entrance there. From the moment that she passed the threshold, closing the only door as she entered, the darkness of the place had not been broken by a ray, nor its death-like silence disturbed by a sound.

Yet the carpet which her footstep pressed was soft and luxurious; the wall which her fingers touched, was shrouded in hangings of satin; the chair in which she sank was cushioned in softest velvet, that yielded like a pillow to her form.

Attired in that hunter's garb, she laid her head on one shoulder, and resigned herself to her thoughts.

The strange story of Lady Marion — how in all its hues of sunshine and cloud, in all its thrilling words of blood and tears, it rose once more upon her soul!

"Within these wild solitudes, dwells an old man, who has made the future his study for seventy years, and wrung supernatural truth, even from the grasp of death. Go to the pavilion, he will meet you there! Your lost brother shall be revealed to you: you shall behold him, even as he is, whether in health or sickness, poverty or wealth!"

How could she doubt words so kind, spoken with beaming eyes and soft hands gently pressed within her own? Perchance, in that moment, Lady Marion spoke but the sincere feeling of her heart; perchance it was but a dear surprise that she intended; perchance from the very shadow of that pavilion the brother would start, and gather the sister to his breast, perchance —

But those words spoken to Gerald Moynton in her bower?

Rose was thinking of her lost brother, when she fell asleep. Such a beautiful dream! A winding path, leading from a summer valley, green with trees and beautiful with flowers along the ascent of a hill among the trunks of centuried oaks. A garden so wild and deserted, its scanty flowers choked by weeds. Then, through the tangled paths, she beheld a blackened wall, with the blue sky gleaming through its desolate windows. Fearfully across that threshold she passed — O, what sigh of horror was here! The half bared form of a beautiful woman lay extended on the hearth, her bosom rent by a hideous gash, and a little babe stretched out its tiny hands, and played with the long dark hair, dabbled in its mother's blood.

As though a hand was at her throat, pressing the breath from her bosom with its iron clutch, Rose struggled, and after a moment like the agony of death, awoke. As she glanced around the park pavilion, a voice unnaturally deep and hollow thrilled on her soul.

"Maiden! would'st thou behold thy brother's form."

Was it but a continuation of her dream? Scarce knowing what she said, Rose gasped, 'I would!"

From the darkness of that chamber, as from the vault of a midnight sky, a faint light struggled into birth, and played upon the maiden's face. Her form is dark, but do you see that face bathed in a pale crimson glow, the eyes dilating, the lips slowly parting, the hair waving back from the white brow! It stands out from the gloom, like a cherub face, painted among misty clouds.

"Thy brother comes!" said that voice, whose source was invisible.

Rose bent forward with hushed breath, and beheld a mirror, glimmering in that pale crimson light. A mirror that now was lost in clouds of light golden mist, and now seemed like a midnight sky, gleaming with a single star. From its centre shone that light, the solitary star!

"Ah! I hear his step — he comes through the wood — his foot is on the threshold — he is here!"

As Rose gasped these words, her whole frame quivering with an emotion almost supernatural, a sudden light flashed from the darkness, bathed her face in darkness, and revealed the form of a young man, who, with his arms folded, stood gazing upon her with a sneering lip, and dull, leaden eyes.

Gerald Moynton and his victim!

"Sister, I have come!" he said, and extended his arms. At the same moment a mass of perfumed vapor, rolling in soft clouds, fills the pavilion, and penetrates the veins of the unprotected girl. She felt all power over her limbs or motions gliding from her, while her mind shone out in renewed vigor. A lulling sensation pervaded every nerve, a dreamy languor, the result of the pungent vapor, which filled the place, possessed her form; she had not power to move a hand or foot, while her very soul shrank within her at the sight of this man, with the pale face and leaden eyes.

"You! my brother! N-o-o-o!" she faintly gasped.

Her form, thrown helplessly on the chair, one limb crossed over the other, her arms resting by her side, as though deprived of all the power of motion; her head laid on the right shoulder; the features perfectly calm and statue-like, while the cheek glows with a faint flush, and her eyes emit a soft fire, diffused like luminous moisture over their surface, between the half closed lids.

She was very beautiful, the helpless Rose of Wissahikon!

But Gerald Moynton had no pity.

His jaded countenance faintly glowed, his

lip was compressed, but his cold, stony eyes — from which the lowest vice had stolen forever the fire of youth — emitted no flashing light.

"I am your brother!" he said, and took her hand. She quivered faintly, made a motion like one oppressed by a nightmare, and moved her lips, but could not utter a sound. O, she shrank from his polluted touch with all her soul, but the misty vapor which filled the room, rendered her helpless as though she had been chained with cords of iron.

"You see my pretty one, and I am your brother, and I love you!"

Bending languidly forward, he kissed her with his colorless lips — yes, pressed those lips which resembled a rose-bud torn in twain — and at the same moment fell like a weight to the floor. Fell, stunned by a sudden blow; fell, trampled by a firm foot!

There, before the motionless maiden, towered a tall form, clad in a many colored blanket whose rich dyes swept from his broad shoulders to the ground, while his bronzed forehead was surmounted by a solitary plume. He stood there, like a king upon his throne; the tiger's skin, which enveloped his form beneath the blanket, relieved by the gleam of a hunting knife. In one arm a rifle; his limbs cased in leggings of buckskin; moccasins upon his feet, he stood before her, his neck rising proudly from his broad shoulders, while his dark red face, with its aquiline nose, firm mouth and prominent chin, was strangely relieved by clear blue eyes.

An Indian of the forest, with clear blue eyes!

"Sister, I have come at last!" he said, that stern red man, and stretched forth his arms.

"Brother!" she cried, and felt herself drawn toward his breast.

"We parted many years ago" — said that voice, speaking clearly with a strong Indian accent — "Beside the body of the dead woman our mother. Many suns, many moons, have gone since then. Sixteen times since that hour, there have been flowers and snows. We meet again! You the Rose of the Valley, the flower of Wissahikon! I, the White Indian, Wayaniko!

Rose heard the voice, and felt her senses glide from her like the dew from the flower before the morning sun.

When she again unclosed her eyes, an old man bent over her — she felt his tears upon her face, his grey hairs touch her cheek; she heard him whisper "Daughter!"

By her side, that tall Indian form gazing upon her, with those clear blue eyes, shining from his dark red face.

Rose, still wrapt in a kind of half consciousness, hears them converse together; hears with blood now burning like lava, now freezing like death, the dark story, in which the names of Walter, Arthur, Reginald are mingled with the name of Lady Marion. She beholds the credentials in her father's hand, even now her lover goes to do a work of treason, perchance murder.

It is a strange, a stormy history!

All she knows, all she feels, is that her lover is in danger.

Darting from the chair, she seizes those credentials, dashes through the door, and clad as she is, in her hunter's garb hurries toward the lane where the carriage waits for her.

The father, the son, stand gazing in each other's face, as though stricken dumb, by this sudden energy of the brave girl.

On, brave Rose on! The glen is past, then the cliff is won, and last of all, the wood of pines is threaded by your frenzied steps.

In the shadiest nook of the sequestered lane, the faithful negro in his gay livery, sitting on the box of the carriage, beholds a slender form dart from the bushes, and in a moment glide within the carriage door.

Away, mettled steeds, away! Through the shadows of the night, you see the carriage ascend the steep of yonder distant hill.

"Ask me not now, father, the cause of my sudden appearance!— the explanation of these mysteries. Be it enough to say, I know all! I must away to the city to save my sister — save your brother, who now goes to do violence to the chief of your nation's council — and save this Reginald, who wears my sister's peace within his breast!"

And as the noble Indian form left the pavilion, Martin Landsdowne sank on his knees, and thanked God for the recovery of these children, whom he had never seen, since that moment when they were torn by rude hands from the bosom of the dead mother.

Tossed by contending passions, her brow disfigured by a frown, her eyes glaring in her livid face, Lady Marion gazed on her discomfitted brother, paced hurriedly along her chamber, and with that muttering of low-toned words, scattered her dark hair by the roots.

"Foiled, and now! Now, when the triumph was ours! Ah, it is too much! Rise, Sir — do not crouch pale and thunderstricken there, but saddle my horse, and get me some arms. The night is but half spent!"

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

THE COUNCIL IN THE OLD STATEHOUSE.

Through old Philadelphia at dead of night, we will hasten, with hushed breath and stealthy tread.

Not through the Philadelphia of our day, which extends for miles on miles, a wilderness of red brick, a gorgeous panorama of wealth and misery — reaching from the marble temple consecrated with the name of Girard, to the ark-like structure of the Navy-yard — from the Elm of Shakamaxon to that palace which rises on the Schuylkill, a mansion for the poor — from river to river — from green hills on the north, to the sloping meadows of the Neck on the south — a beautiful city, with such elegant streets — such dark alleys — such white banks, and such picturesque jails; — such magnificent churches — some rising in the pride of their varied architecture, and some blackening in the day, rearing the awful witness of their blasted walls to the blue sky of God!

No! almost the only thing of the old Philadelphia that yet remains is the Hall of the Declaration, and that speculation dare not batter into ruins — the lust of money cannot gnaw into dust! Even as the Hebrew people of old solemnly cursed the man who removed the sacred landmark, or stoned to atoms the wretch who spat upon his mother's gray hairs, so let him be treated who removes a brick or pollutes an inch of glorious Independence Hall!

Old Philadelphia, as it lay beneath the midnight sky, on the 3d of July, 1776, was altogether a different thing from the Philadelphia of 1847.

Along the Delaware, two miles north and south; from the Delaware to the west, but a mile at most; — such was its extent. From where Broad street now extends — the most beautiful avenue in the world for gay young gentlemen, ambitious of a fast-trotting horse — to the waves of the Schuylkill, all was a thick wood, as wild as the red men whom it sheltered, not a hundred years ago.

From Bush Hill for a mile or two into the city, were green fields, beautiful hills, and picturesque country-seats. In brief, some four or five cities, like the old Philadelphia, could, with ease, be laid to sleep in the lap of the modern "Brotherly Love."

Through these streets, then let us hurry; in front of the Statehouse, which arises from a green lawn, overspread with trees, and encircled by a rude broad fence, let us stay our steps, and survey the scattered crowds who cluster there.

The clock whose face is seen near the top of the abutment projecting from the rear of the Statehouse, points to the hour of twelve; the 3d of July is near its end, and, flashing on the world, a beautiful thing of godlike hopes, the Fourth of July trembles on the verge of birth.

What means these crowds? Those voices, whispering low? The mingled garb of merchant, mechanic, farmer and laborer, scattered over the lawn? Listen! For days Congress has been in secret session, and a strange rumor broods upon the air, that they are planning some deed which will startle the world!

Only one window of the old Statehouse emits a ray of light. Light, through carefully closed curtains, comes forth in trembling rays, and dies on the darkness of the lawn.

While yon immense cloud gathers over the Statehouse — so black, so dense, so like a pall — let us hasten up these wide stairs, along this dark hall, through the darker corridor, into this small room, separated by partitions from the larger chambers of the second-story, and hung with plain tapestry of a rich dark color.

It is a simply furnished room. A huge table of solid oak, on which a shaded lamp is placed, a few heavy chairs, a curtain, hanging across the ceiling, and marking a dark space of some few feet between its folds and the narrow door. You behold this Council Chamber of the old Statehouse

Around that table are seated five men

whose various faces and different attitudes strike you with a deep interest.

Alone, at the head of the table, bending over an unfolded sheet, traced with the characters of a firm, round hand, you behold a tall, athletic man, clad in a plain costume of iron grey, such as a farmer who dwelt in the quiet of his fields might wear. His hair is sandy — almost red; his complexion somewhat fair, but marked with freckles; his features bold and prominent, but his clear gray eyes light up his face, and warm each feature with the fire of a determined soul.

As he bends over the paper, you see his long fingers pass from line to line, while his cheek, warming with a crimson flush, betrays the presence of deep emotion. That is Thomas Jefferson, a Delegate from Virginia, who has distinguished himself in Congress, as a "Silent member, but prompt, frank, explicit and decisive; not so much renowned for great speeches, as for his literary and scientific attainments." *

On his right, leaning back in the wide arm-chair, sat a man dressed in a rich suit of brown velvet, his hands folded calmly over his chest. Not so tall, but somewhat larger in bulk than his companion, his face ruddy in the cheeks, intricate with wrinkles where the brows meet, piercing in the eyes, displays at once the fever and irritability of genius.

That is John Adams, the Delegate from Boston, who thunders, three times a day, in that voice that wakes up men's souls — "GREAT BRITIAN IS THE NATURAL ENEMY OF AMERICA!"

Far back, in the shadows, you see a mild face, beaming with a gentle smile about the lips, the eyes full of calm light, the forehead relieved by brown hair, silvered with age, and falling in heavy curls behind the ears, stamped with the outlines of a giant intellect.

Benjamin Franklin, the printer boy, who has lured the lightnings from the sky, and hurled them at thrones of kings.

On one side of Franklin, a man, whose short stout form is clad in a dress of dark green — whose ruddy face, stamped with the traces of an honest heart, is also marked by the lines of thought. Roger Sherman, the shoemaker of Connecticut.

* Words of John Adams.

There a gentleman, who is attired in a rich garb of dark velvet, while his face, somewhat jovial in its expression, sparkles with the light of flashing black eyes, that glance to and fro with a restless expression.

That is Robert R. Livingston, of New York.

"I like that paper, Jefferson," said Adams, drawing his chair nearer to the table; "I am delighted with its high tone — its flights of oratory; especially that concerning negro slavery, which, however, I am afraid will touch our Southern brethren who own slaves ——"

One of those cold smiles which gave such a cutting sarcasm to the face of Jefferson, now crossed his lips.

"Or, our Northern brethren, some of whom are carriers of slaves," he quietly said.

"There is one word, however, which I do not like," exclaimed Adams. "You call King George a 'tyrant.' Now, I regard his crimes as rather of an official than a private nature ——"

"Yes, Claudius Nero was a gentleman of the most amiable qualities, and yet he murdered a few thousand Christians every day, and fiddled sometimes over burning Rome."

Not a smile ruffled the severity of Franklin's face, as he uttered this sentiment.

"To be sure," said Livingston; "Lexington and Bunker Hill were fine illustrations of the amiable, Christian character of our good King."

"It is indeed severe to call him a tyrant, when he values our heads at such a reasonable price," said Sherman, the shoemaker.

The irritable blood of Adams began to glow.

"Well, have it as you will — I care not for the weak, misguided man. My love for his government has been recorded in my actions." He grasped Jefferson by the hand — "That is a noble document — such as they never dreamed of in Greece or Rome. It does you eternal honor."

A glow of pleasure pervaded Jefferson's face. To be praised by stout-hearted John Adams, was worth fine gold.

Just fifty years and six hours from the moment when Jefferson and Adams joined hands in that council room, they lay on their death-beds, separated by a distance of four hundred miles, yet joined in one glory, their freezing

ears filled with the cannon-thunder and earthquake-shouts of the Fourth of July.

"Read it again, Jefferson," said Franklin.

As Jefferson prepared to read the paper once again, a noise — like a stealthy footstep — was heard, behind yonder curtain. They did not heed that sound of warning. Yet, behind the curtain and in the corridor, without the chamber, twenty swords gleamed through the darkness.

They did not hear that sound, nor the deep whisper of Reginald Landsdowne of St. Leonard's — "A moment, and the conspirators are ours!"

Thomas Jefferson read the Declaration once again.

How his eyes flashed — how his deep tones rung through the chamber, as he uttered words like these: —

"*These facts* — [the long recital of galling wrongs] — *have given the last stab to agonizing affection, and manly spirit bids us renounce forever these unfeeling brethren. We must endeavor to forget our former love for them, and to hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends. We might have been a free and a great people together; but a communication of grandeur and of freedom it seems is below their dignity. Be it so, since they will have it. The road to happiness and to glory is open to us too.* WE WILL TREAD IT APART FROM THEM."

There was the strong fever of enthusiasm upon the face of Jefferson, as he uttered the last word of the Declaration.

"But this is not all!" he said — "When the war is over and our freedom won, the People must make a new Declaration — They must declare the rights of man, the individual, sacred above all craft in priesthood or government. They must, at one blow, declare the end of all those trickeries of English Law, which garnered up from the charnels of age, bind the heart and will with lies. They must perpetuate republican truth, by declaring the homestead of every American, a holy thing, which no law can touch, no juggle wrest, from his wife and children. Until this is done, the Revolution will have been fought in vain."

These words created strong emotions in the breasts of his compatriots.

"This is true, but we must take care to preserve the balance of power in our government," exclaimed Adams; "with all its faults, the English system seems the best — "

"The King pulling one way, the house of lords tugging another, while the commons is hauled about by both together!" exclaimed Franklin, with one of his quiet smiles.

Sherman and Livingston exchanged meaning glances, and joined in his smile.

Again that sound behind the curtain!

But Jefferson rose to his feet, his angular form displayed in the shaded light. In a tone of deep conviction, he spoke. Oh, that I could write his words of holy truth in every American heart!

"Our People must take care that the labor, the blood of the Revolution, is not spent in vain. There is one evil, above all others, which I fear — *the government of this Confederacy centralized at the Capitol, surrounded by innumerable hordes of office-holders, dependent on its will, and backed by a Judiciary independent of the People.* You may talk, gentlemen, of an age not being prepared for their progress into perfect freedom, you may whisper 'It is not yet time!' but the word of God, the history of centuries, attests the fact that for a people determined to be wholly free, it is always Time; that for an age resolved to work out its own destiny, it is always Day!"

When the heart of Jefferson was in his words, his freckled cheek glowed with crimson, and his eye flashed the fire of a soul conscious of its powers. So now, rising above his compatriots, he thrilled in every nerve, while his words shot like electric fire, to every heart.

"We must make the Declaration unanimous," he said, resuming his seat. "For days the debate has been fierce and tumultuous. But nowwe have nerved the timorous, frowned the wavering from our councils, and combined the forces of freedom into one solid front. That was a noble deed, the Declaration made by Pennsylvania, on the 28th of June! — We have tested our men, and know them! Yet there is one man absent, whose presence I especially desire — the lately elected Delegate from the State of —— who has not yet taken his seat. I mean —— "

The State House clock striking the hour of twelve, interrupted his words.

The Fourth of July was born.

"I mean Reginald Landsdowne of Landsdowne "

"He is here!" said a deep voice.

At the word, the curtain was dashed aside, and the gleam of swords shone through the Council Room. Silently around that council table, circled twenty gallant forms, surrounding Jefferson and his compatriots with a wall of glittering steel.

Silently a solitary form advanced; stood before Jefferson; his tall form heaving with emotion, his pale face traced with the fiery resolve of that hour.

"Reginald Landsdowne!" said Jefferson, rising with calm dignity.

"I am here! Conspirators, you are our prisoners!" cried Reginald, placing his sword before the heart of Jefferson.

"Prisoners?" echoed Adams, starting to his feet.

"Yes, your plans are known, your schemes are revealed!" spoke Reginald, his breast heaving with deep indignation. "Ah! shame, eternal shame upon your heads! You, the Prophets of Freedom, to become the executioners! You, Jefferson, to plan the overthrow of Washington — you, Franklin, to fling the sceptre of the Continent once more at the feet of the English king — you, Sherman, Livingston, stern republicans as you are, to join in this work — and Adams, first and bravest of the heroes of the council, you who nominated Washington, to plot his downfall!"

An indignant murmur pervaded the council chamber, while the band drew closer round their prisoners.

"Surely, this is some dream!" cried Jefferson, very calmly, but with a flash of anger rising on his face.

"Say rather, a plot to assassinate us!" cried Adams, all his tumultuous passion flashing to his face.

Franklin quietly folded his arms, and whispered with Livingston and Sherman. They heard the murmurs of the men, who gathered at their backs, and saw those swords gleam through the darkness, but were calm.

"You are our prisoners!" The form of Reginald rose to its full stature, as he spoke the words. "To crush your schemes, we are forced to control your liberty, until the People know your crime. To meet the forces of the enemy, traitors within and foes without, we are resolved to stand in one solid phalanx, our leader, WASHINGTON THE KING.

And through that dim council chamber, with the lights burning in the centre, and glittering on the blades of twenty swords, rose the deep chorus — "*Washington the King!*"

At the word, which in the breath revealed the canker-worm always gnawing at the root of republican freedom — the elevation of one man to supreme power — Jefferson stood aghast.

"Reginald, you are mad? Read this, aye read, and then hurl charges like these at our heads!"

He pointed to the Declaration, but with his head erect, his sword circling through the darkened air, Reginald started proudly back.

"Read! Have I not read the proofs of your treachery? Comrades, what say ye all? Have we not seen the names of these men attached to letters as base as they are decisive? Gentlemen, there is no need of further words. We are resolved to crush your cabal with our lives!"

Now came the crisis of the scene.

Jefferson and Adams stood side by side, while at the other end of the table, Franklin, Sherman, and Livingston formed a group. The face of Jefferson was pale, Adams crimson; Sherman stood with his lip fixedly clenched, while the hand of Livingston sought the hilt of the small dress-sword which he wore.

Franklin alone was calm.

"Advance! You are prisoners, gentlemen!"

Jefferson quietly removed his chair, retreated a step, and confronted Landsdowne, with his unquailing eye.

"Do not lay your hand on me," said he, in that calm tone. There was danger in his look.

Reginald advanced, his sword clenched in his good right hand, his soul resolved, when a circumstance occurred that deepened the tumultuous emotions of the scene.

A hand was laid upon the arm of Reginald. He turns, all the blood in his body rushing to his face, he clutches his sword resolved to revenge the touch of violence, and holds its glittering blade above the head of —— ROSE!

In the hunter's dress, her knees bending be-

neath her with fatigue, her arms extended, her head drooping on her bosom, she lifts her eyes to his face.

"Read!" she gasps, and forces the packet in his hand. "It is a plot — a scheme, to lure you on to ruin. Behold these forgeries! Ah! I have foiled this dark and scheming woman. Thank God! It is not yet too late!"

You may imagine that scene!

Every eye centred upon the disguised woman, who, like a flower shaken by the storm, trembled before Reginald, as he stood with sword sunk into the floor, his eyes fixed upon his credentials as Delegate to the Continental Congress.

For a moment he stood as one bewildered in a dream.

The swords of his comrades fell; Jefferson gazed upon him in sincere pity, Franklin and the other patriots awaited in silence the issue of the scene.

"O, Arthur," cried the brave girl, her bosom beating against the vest, until it burst the fastenings — "Do not wonder, do not pause. I cannot explain it — I know not how it is! But believe it is all a scheme contrived for your ruin. O, my heart beats and I am so faint — I would fain tell you all, but my father — my brother ——"

The storm of feeling shook the Rose, at last.

Spreading out her arms, while her hair, falling from beneath her cap, waved over her form, she fell.

But Franklin caught her in his arms, exclaiming as he gazed upon the young cheek, gleaming so white, through the intervals of her flowing hair ——. "Upon my life, it is a woman!"

Franklin was a Philosopher.

Meanwhile Jefferson and Adams examined the papers, which Rose had scattered on the table.

"Forgeries," whispered the former. "Another trick of his Majesty's minions, and by no means the weakest. Those forgeries are excellently done."

Reginald's sword clattered on the floor.

That sound jarred through the council chamber like a knell. Ere it had died away, a louder sound, crashed like thunder on the air. Twenty swords fell to the floor.

Reginald stood as if in a dream, pressing the paper with the same hand that clasped his burning brow.

"Speak, Landsdowne!" cried his comrades, their voices mingling in chorus — "Is it a trick — have we been duped! Speak — are these men good and true?"

It was now Jefferson's turn to prove his magnanimity.

"Reginald, read this," he quietly said, and led young Landsdowne to the table.

Reginald bent down. You behold that pale face, with lips working, the eyes rolling, as it hurries over the immortal lines, you perceive the clenched hands laid on the table.

"O, shame!" he gasped, beating his brow against those hands which rested on the table — "To be made the tool of this ambitious woman." They could see the blushes glow beneath his hands. "But there is a remedy for it all! I can yet atone for my fault! To-morrow, Jefferson, I will sign it, and, then if need be, spend my life to maintain its truth!"

He raised the draft of the Declaration above his head, while his comrades gathered around him, and Jefferson shook him by the hand.

At the same moment, Rose nestling in the arms of Franklin, unclosed her eyes, while a smile like heaven blushed over her face. Parting the long hair from her cheek, she gazed with dim eyes — shining through their tears — upon her lover, and whispered,

"Arthur! I was not too late!"

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

THE PURPLE CHAMBER.

THE Purple Chamber in the city mansion of Reginald, combined in one view all that is gorgeous in luxury, delicate in taste, or beautiful in art.

Separated by a wide saloon from the street, its four windows looked out upon the trees and flowers of an extensive garden. Soft carpets beneath the feet, a wide ceiling, warmed with the richest creations of the painter above your head — wherever you turned, a white statue gleaming in beauty on you — its dark rich purple tapestry, whether bathed in moonlight, or gilded by the sun, imparted a luxurious tone to the chamber of Reginald Landsdowne.

It was now three o'clock on the morning of the FOURTH OF JULY.

A small lamp stood on yonder marble table, placed in front of the mirror, which reached from the ceiling to the floor.

By its light you behold the bed in yonder recess, with the white counterpane, seen between the intervals of the silken canopy. Those curtains agitated by the slight breeze that finds entrance, wave in luxurious folds from the dome of the canopy to the floor.

It is three o'clock, and across the threshold of the Purple Chamber, there glided two youthful forms, one reclining on the other's breast and arm.

As they approach the light we will stand here in the shadow and behold them.

One, a young man, whose dark hair falls aside from a countenance marked with the traces of much suffering, yet glowing with a calm joy on the bold cheek, and shining with deep happiness, in the large full eyes. It is Arthur, Walter, Reginald, attired still in that uniform of green faced with gold.

Leaning on his arm, her head upon his breast, the Rose of Wissahikon raises her eyes to his face, and her beautiful hair flowing over the hands which gather her to his heart, hides in its glossy veil her hunter's dress.

It was said by a shrewd Philosopher, perhaps Dr. Franklin; certainly one who had given much attention to the subject, that the most beautiful thing of all that is beautiful, in this lower world, was a — beautiful woman.

I am disposed to improve upon this thought. Standing in the shadow of this Purple Chamber, I am induced to confess that of all beautiful women, the most bewitching is a pure girl attired in a picturesque hunter's costume, which in its turn is only seen by glimpses through the intervals of her flowing auburn hair. That hair looks brown, and black, and purple by turn, and reaches to her knees.

The words that passed Reginald's lips, as treading softly over the threshold, he bore the maiden along the chamber, was remarkable.

"This is our bridal chamber!"

Strange words these, when you remember that Reginald is yet ignorant of the relationship of this poor peasant maid to a wealthy planter, unconscious of the dear tie which binds her to the heart of Martin Landsdowne. He only knows that she has saved him; saved more than his life, his honor.

"This is our bridal chamber, Rose!"

She should have made some eloquent reply, expressed surprise at the change in her lover's appearance, or suffered an exclamation of wonder to pass her peasant lips, she should, indeed —

But she did not.

Nestling on his breast, in the most natural manner in the world, the Rose of Wissahikon bloomed beneath his gaze, and felt her lips mingle with his.

And then the air that shook the curtains of the window, also shook her long hair, until it waved and shone again.

At this moment, as bending over his bride, he pressed his kiss upon her lips, the hangings of yonder couch rustled to and fro. Is it with the wind?

Gaze upon that form emerging from the curtains, that face, dark with conflicting passions, its eyes dazzling with almost fiendish light, and answer me!

The Lady Marion stood a silent witness of this scene of love.

Her dark hair, which was gathered back from her brow in one rich mass, made her pale face seem more pale; her livid lip and breath that came and went in gasps; her small foot pressed against the carpet, quivering as it peeped from her dark dress, all told the story of her passion and her agony.

Yet the pistol in her extended hand, speaks a language plainer still. She raises it, and in terrible silence takes deliberate aim, and fires!

The jarring report crashes through the chamber, but cannot drown the sound of that form, plunging heavily on the carpet. The smoke clouds the sight, but cannot conceal that face with the ghastly wound between the brows.

O, it is not Reginald, in his young manhood, nor Rose, in the dewey freshness of her beauty —— The heart grows cold to think it.

As the smoke clears away we behold that form.

There, tossing on the carpet, clutching its surface with cramped fingers, pouring blood upon its flowers from the hideous wound, between the brows; now writhing until the heels touch the back of the head; now stiffen-

ing out like a thing of marble, an old man struggles with death.

On one side, pale, aghast, at her own work, looking if possible more livid, the Lady Marion stands with her hands dropped by her side.

Opposite, Rose clings to Reginald's neck, glancing over her shoulder, at the hideous struggles of the dying man.

One word bursts from every lip—

"Michael!"

Yes, it is the old hermit of the woods; he stood upon the threshold; he saw the levelled pistol; he saved the life of Rose, the child of the murdered woman, whom he once so madly loved.

You may be sure that his struggles were horrible but brief. That wound had went straight to the altar of life, and dashed its light into darkness.

He raised himself upon his knees, clasped his cramped hands, and with the blood pouring over his glassy eyes, gasped two brief words with his last breath:

"Your oath!"

Yes, even in that moment he cared for the honor of Rose. Yes, Reginald, your oath, uttered in the deep woods in the evening hour! Now answer with a true heart, or shrink, a cringing perjurer, before the last look of the dying man.

"She is my wife!" he said, and the old man sank slowly down, and moved no more.

He died without knowing that his brother lived. And yet that brother stole across the threshold, and bent over his still bleeding form, until his white hairs mingled with the blood, flowing from the fatal wound.

He died ignorant of the existence of that brother's son. And yet he was there, there beside his sister Rose. He had followed the old hunter to the house of President Hancock, and on the very threshold, whispered a word which directed his steps at once to Reginald's house. Following them, joined at the door by his father, he had heard the sound of the pistol, and now beheld the sad result.

He towered there, the White Indian, gazing with impenetrable features on the scene, while his very heart was torn within him. From his broad shoulder drooped the war blanket; in his tunic of tiger-skin gleamed the hunting knife. He gazed upon the mangled form and did not weep.

"I must to my tribe again!" he said—"Too much blood here!"

The emotion of Reginald and Rose need not be told. Read it in his downcast head, in her eyes, turned wildly over her shoulder.

And far back in the Bridal Chamber, leaning against the Bridal Bed, which she never might adorn, a pallid, gibbering thing, her finger on her lip, and her unloosened hair falling wildly over her face, the Lady Marion rent the air with peals of horrible laughter.

She was an Idiot.

CHAPTER NINTH.

THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1776.

The mild clear light of a summer day was upon the roof and steeple of the old State House.

Beautifully in the beams of that calm hour, glowed every point of the massive structure, its windows glittering like living gold, its roofs with heavy ornaments along the eaves, bathed in light, while the steeples stood clearly out, against the blue sky.

It was toward the close of day, when the trees in the lawn shook their leaves in the rays of the setting sun, while over the city from the forest on the west, to the waves of the Delaware, the mild golden radiance invested the roofs in a veil of sunbeams.

The zenith of the sky, calm as an infant's sleep, extended above the scene, a dome of clear deep azure, and on the west, over the wide sweep of woods, huge masses of white clouds, piled up in the horizon—their forms of snow, contrasted with the green of the foliage, the blue of the heaven—slowly rolling apart, disclosed the full glory of the setting sun.

Such a sun had never set for eighteen hundred years.

Not that its glorious beams arrest our attention alone, nor the many dyes which it flung in parting, over roof and tree and sky, alone attract our gaze, but because the Day, which its setting closed, marked an era in the history of Man.

On that day a Continent in fierce travail for its rights, struggled into birth and became a Peo,

As evening came on, the crowd which had all day long thronged the arena of the State House, and darkened in the open space along its front, or gathered in a dense mass, under the old trees of the lawn, was swelled by new accessions.

It seemed as if the city had poured its people from their firesides, and sent them thronging into the scene. Nor was the crowd merely composed of the rich, in their soft apparel, nor of the poor in their work-day attire; but the men whose hearts beat for their country, were there, and among their ranks, with sidelong looks and ominous scowls, glided the creatures of the king.

The women too, were there, some with their young faces glowing more beautiful with love of country, some with their warm lips curling in sneers, as the word "Freedom" whispered on the air, and some, with anxious faces, holding in their arms those babes, whose fathers were absent fighting the battles of their native land. They came in silken attire, they came in their coarse linsey peasant garb, they came in matronly apparel, with a mild light playing over their matured brows; the women of the city and the field, forgetting the severe modesty of their sex, in the interest of the day, were there

For all day long—from the moment when the first beam of light played upon the State House steeple, until now, when its last kiss lingers there—a rumor had crept through the city, and deepened and spread until it filled every heart.

And all day long, without a moment's interval, the Congress had been holding their secret session in the large hall, on the east of the main avenue, while the people awaited in quivering anxiety the result of their deliberations.

As the day wore on, that rumor deepened, and now, from lip to lip a word thrills like electric fire—"INDEPENDENCE!"

Let us wander through the crowd, in front of the State House, and see the varying passions painted on each face, and listen to the whispers until we feel our hearts swell with the same interest that fills every bosom. Oh, the eloquence of those women's faces, the stern anxiety of those patriot looks!

Hark! A murmur swells through the crowd, you see it surging far from the walls of the State House, away to the trees, that rise on either hand. There is a sound in yonder avenue, the tread of many feet—listen! that murmur, "Congress has closed its session, and the work is done!"

Then from that door, with massive pillars, come forth one by one, the members of the solemn council. How the smile upon their faces flashes through the crowd!

First, while other delegates mingle with the crowd and answer their hurried questions, a gentleman of mild appearance, yet with a bold brow and keen eye, comes to the verge of the steps, and stretches forth his hands.

Every eye in the crowd beholds his dark attire, relieved by cambric ruffles and lace of gold, for the gentleman is one of Boston's stout-hearted merchant princes. From lip to lip, the murmur runs, "John Hancock, the President!"

And as he stretched forth his left hand, holding a parchment in his right, you see Franklin standing with uncovered brow, the foremost of the group at his back, with the sunlight playing on his animated face. That form, tall and angular, leaning with one hand behind the back, the other raised to the heart, against the pillar on the right side of the door, while the face, with the eyes sunken beneath the downdrawn brows, the nether lip compressed, the nerves quivering with an emotion, not the less deep because it is scarce perceptible.

It is Thomas Jefferson. Never king upon his throne, never conqueror on the battle-field, felt a deeper joy than thrilled his bosom then! Glorious Prophet of the Rights of Man, how my heart beats, as through the mists of seventy-one years, I survey you, standing there, against the right pillar of the State House door, with the sunshine streaming over your glowing face!

Stout-hearted John Adams stands between him and Franklin, his face beaming as he rests his hand on Jefferson's arm, and converses with him, repeating the word which swells every heart — Independence!

Between the heads of Jefferson and Adams, you see the face of Livingston; while leaning against the left pillar, Roger Sherman gazes on the scene.

Hancock stretches forth his hand —

An old soldier, battered with cuts and scars, hobbles up to the foot of the steps, and with the marks of the Indian wars and Bunker Hill upon his face, gasps the words, "Well, President, is it all right?"

There is silence in that breathless crowd.

Every ear in the throng hears his reply, spoken in calm, conversational tones.

"It is! This day we have signed our Declaration of Independence! To-morrow it will be published in the Gazette, and on the eighth day of July, proclaimed from the State House steps. From this day there are no Colonies, but States. From this day there is no British dominion, but the Republic of the United States of America!"

Did you ever see a bolt of lightning stream in one red mass from the zenith, and then scatter in a thousand rays of fire, over the tree-tops of an undulating wood?

So these words rush into every heart, and burst upon the crowd, scattering their rays in every heart.

The crowd is terribly still for a moment, and then the murmur swells into a shout.

At this moment, a little boy, whose golden hair tosses about his rosy cheeks, steals up the steps and clutches the President by the knee, and whispers — "The old man in the steeple sent me down to ask you whether he should ring the bell? Shall I say ring?"

Hancock pressed his hands upon the head of the child, and said — "You will live to see the day, my child, when the voice of that bell will have been heard by all the world! Tell the old man to ring!"

Through the crowd, brave boy! Out into the street, and clap your tiny hands until the old man in yonder steeple hears you. Look! with his bronzed face and snow white hair, he bends from the steeple, he sees that child, with flushed cheeks and golden hair, clap his hands, he hears that boyish shout — "Ring!"

Then the old man bared his arm, and the bell on which was written — "PROCLAIM LIBERTY TO THE LAND, AND ALL THE INHABITANTS THEREOF," spoke to the city, to the People, to a world in chains.

As the tones of that bell go swinging over the city, let us look upon the strange tumultuous panorama in front of the State House, now known forever as INDEPENDENCE HALL.

It is a picture, or rather a combination of pictures, worthy of the artist's pencil, but which requires the pen of Jefferson or the voice of Patrick Henry to describe.

It resolves itself into three prominent points of view.

First, the group on the left of the hall door.

An Indian stands with his back towards us, in the act of stepping toward a group whom he surveys, his rich blanket, revealing the bold outline of his right shoulder, and drooping in rainbow hues to the ground. His face — but partly seen in its marked profile, is turned slightly to the left, while over his brow waves the plume of snowy feathers, and down to his shoulders streams that mass of straight black hair.

The group on which he gazes!

Do you see that young man, attired in a rich dark dress, bending with uncovered brow, before a beautiful girl, who clings to the arm of an aged man? Her young face blooming with the fullness of life and love, is surmounted by a slight bonnet that crowns her flowing hair; her beautiful neck and white shoulders, and a glimpse of her virgin bosom, glow in the light of the fading day. Her form is clad in a flowing dress of plain white, that waves from the bosom to the feet, while the arm, around whose half-bared outlines flutters a silken shawl, points to the President's form, as it rises above the crowd, in front of those massive pillars.

The light which blazes from the young man's eye is reflected in the joyous sunshine of her face.

That look, flashing from face to face, tells the whole story.

"This is better" — exclaimed the Rose of Wissahikon — "much better than last night!"

"To you," cried Reginald, with the blood rising to his face; "to you, I owe the share which I have taken in the glorious deed of this day. If the name of Reginald Lansdowne, of St. Leonard's, goes down to posterity as a 'Signer of the Declaration,' the merit of his fame belongs to the — Rose of Wissahikon!"

And while the noble Indian contemplates with calm satisfaction this group — his sister, his father, and the husband of that sister — look yonder, over the shoulder of Reginald, and see that face, lowering with malignant

passions, livid with crushed hopes, the clenched hand raised to the chin, the cold, dead eye, turning from these glowing faces with hatred and fury.

It is Gerald Moynton, the brother of the Idiot Woman, Lady Marion; the minion of the King.

The second point of interest, in fact the centre of the picture, directly in front of the State House door ———

Three figures, standing in a group, and talking earnestly of the great Declaration. One, with his back to the Indian, his bold profile turned towards us, his hand pressed to his side, grasping a paper, with a book beneath his arm. A long brown coat reaches to his knees. You see, in the outlines of his face, the stamp of a strong genius. The dark eye flashes a fire which kings have felt, and trembled for their thrones. There is a mocking scorn upon his lip, which has made the tools of power writhe more than once. Altogether, his attitude, his face, impress us with a deep interest in this man.

Thomas Paine, the author-hero of the Revolution!

That book beneath his arm, "Common Sense," produced the "Declaration," a rude draft of which he grasps in his hand.*

With that full, large eye, flashing with the consciousness of genius, he surveys the form of Robert Morris, who stands opposite, holding hat and cane in one hand, while he extends the other to Benjamin Rush, and congratulates him on the fulfilment of the great work.

"This is a great day!" he said — this patriot without a stain — this banker without a fault.

"Yes, a glorious day!" You see Rush, in the earnestness of his thoughts, raise the left hand, grasping his cane, while his calm face glows, and his eyes fixed on the air, seem glancing into the future "The children of unborn time will behold its perfect work. It is to you, Paine, we owe it! The book which you first suggested to me — which I besought you to write — which you wrote and scattered to the world, startled the country into thought, and wrote 'Independence' in every honest heart."

As we survey these three men, their faces warmed by the same glow, let us remember the manner in which they died. Paine — having forsaken that Bible, from which he gleaned the truths of "Common Sense" — died a miserable and heart-broken man. Morris, whose financial genius saved his country in her darkest hour, died in a common jail, to which the holy law of "imprisonment for debt" — which yet obtains in same savage communities — consigned him. Rush alone, calm and serene, rich in the fame of science and humanity, died in his home.

Passing this group, we come to the third point of interest. A confused crowd, stretching away under the shade of these trees, moving to and fro, gesticulating earnestly, as they conversed on the great topic of the hour. Here, a fiery patriot rises his arm, as if to strike a calm-faced Tory, who doubts the expediency of the means.

"It is not yet time, thee sees, my friend."

"Time! Zounds, sir, it never will be time, so long as we permit traitors like you to prowl the streets!"

Thus strolling through the crowd, we may see every variety of expression — every change of countenance; the hearts of men glow in their faces — speak not only in their words, but in the upraised arm and significant finger.

And, all the while, that group upon the steps rises above the crowd, the object of every eye, their faces revealed by the light which flashes from the west; Hancock, the President, foremost in the group, while Jefferson leans against the pillar, and the compatriots cluster round.

And all the while, with a peal and a clang, the bell spoke out, saying to the kings on their thrones — and, of all kings, to the weak and wicked George of England — "Doom! doom! doom!"

Then changing its peal, it spoke to man, whether in workshop or the mine — whether toiling in the field or bleeding in the battle, and the word, that it said, as the sun went down, was still — "Dawn! dawn! dawn!"

Doom to kings — the night of death! Dawn to man — the day-break of freedom!

Thus, as the sun went down, the glorious

* By the united testimony of Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Ramsay, Rush, and Barlow, the vital agency of Paine, in this great work, is affirmed.

Liberty-bell rang at once a curse and blessing on the solemn close of the FOURTH OF JULY.

President Hancock advanced through the crowd, and confronted the White Indian, as he towered in the pride of his forest stature.

"I have heard your story. How, stolen when a child from the ruined home of your father, you were reared at once by the Indians, an Indian like themselves; and, by an American colonist who had forsaken society for the turmoil of savage life, in all the knowledge of the white race. I know your heart! You would serve your country — serve Washington?"

"Wayaniko lives but to serve the great chief!" said the White Indian, as he stood in the presence of his father, Reginald, and the Rose of Wissahikon. "Speak the word, and it is done!"

"Will you ride an hundred miles or more to-night? Take this parchment," and he drew near the Indian, and whispered a few words — "The horse stands ready for you across the river, in Cooper's woods. To-night," he said aloud, "you must seek the camp of Washington!"

At once gathering his blanket about his form, the Indian turned, and, with the parchment to his breast, without a word of farewell to father or sister, hurried to the river side.

"Now," said Reginald as he took Rose, in all her beauty, from her father's arm — "Now, we must away to the home that wooes us with its smile, the Cottage Home of Wissahikon!"

CHAPTER TENTH

THE MESSENGER OF FREEDOM.

UPON the river a boat glided like an arrow toward the eastern shore, while the last flush of day is in the sky — the last smile of light on the waters.

In that boat, you see the form of Wayaniko, wielding the oar that hisses through the waves, as he fixes his eye on the distant woods. Away, away — the sunlight's last gleam upon your face, brave Indian! Away, away — with the sacred parchment near your heart! Away, away — for you have a hundred miles to ride, ere the rising of the morrow's sun.

"To the Camp — to the Camp of Washington!"

The boat glides into that quiet cove, overhung with boughs and flowers. Not a moment passes ere his foot is on the shore. He leaves the boat, and hurries into the wood. There a magnificent white horse, arrayed in splendid caparisons, awaits him. At once the Indian unbuckles the splendid saddle, dashes it on the ground, and, with his blanket waving all around him, leaps on the bare back of the steed.

He threads the mazes of the wood, and, just as the night comes down, emerges on the public road. Some farmers, returning from their daily toil, behold that white horse and his Indian rider dashing toward them, and shrink back amazed.

"The camp of Washington?" cried the Indian, bending over the neck of his horse.

They point the way, and he is gone

The night comes down — the stars flash out — and still he hurries on. The steed seems to feel its precious burden — seems to know that it bears a warrior form and a sacred parchment, and, with its eye gleaming through the night, thunders away.

One hundred miles before the rising of the sun — ten miles an hour, with scarce a moment's rest — a second's delay! A brave thing to do, gallant war-horse; and a deed that will cost you your life.

Now, in the shadows of a glen — now on the ascent of a hill — now in sight of the broad river, with its opposite bank lined with gardens and flowers.

Still the Indian hurries on!

The only word that he speaks, as he rushes into the view of the belated wayfarer is — The Camp, the Camp of Washington! The only way in which his dark eye gazes, is to the north, for there they say it lies, there miles on miles away, the Camp of Washington!

At last, in the old town of Trenton — which six months afterward became the scene of Washington's last hope — he reins the white steed, surrounded by a crowd who hurry from their doors with torches in their hands. They gaze in wonder upon the panting horse; this tall rider, with his straight dark hair, lined with a coronal of snow-white feathers, and the blanket of many colors floating from his shoulders.

You may see them stand in the street, circling round Wayaniko, the lights above their heads, the dark town all around.

"The way," he cries — "the way to the camp of Washington?"

He sees their extended hands; that space in the street is vacant; far through the night clatters the sound of hoofs, and gleams the vision of the white steed and his Indian rider.

The moon rises, the hours glide, Princeton and Brunswick are passed. The Raritan gleams far behind in the light of the moon. The road rises over rocks and hills, then the Indian messenger is lost in the bosom of thick woods. Still the brave horse, urged to his utmost speed, bathed all over with foam, bounds from the earth and skims along.

The moon rises! Slowly up yonder hill, rugged with crags, dark with pines, the white horse toils along, his master's blanket fluttering down his flanks. Not once is that Indian's face turned back; still his dark eye to the north, still he looks for the camp of Washington.

The moon rises! A flying cloud overspreads it with a veil. Down into the hollow where the brook boils beneath the trembling bridge; down into the stream with the cool water flowing around the limbs of the panting steed. For a moment he pauses, suffers the horse to wet his nostrils and his mouth in the grateful current, and then presses his flanks with his knee and bids him on!

As the cloud rolls from the moon, do you see that wide meadow, its sea of grass waving in the clear light, with the white horse dashing over its surface, while the Indian towers erect on his back, the war blanket fluttering far behind him.

The moon sinks from her throne in the zenith. Down through the clouds that float about her, down through the blue vault until her horizontal rays tremble faintly over the wide expanse of hills and valleys.

Along the dark wood where log huts rise among the pines, the white horse thunders now. Panting, foaming, his mane waving in the cool breeze, he glides along, while the blood begins to mingle with the froth around his nostrils.

Look! A crowd of dark forms overspread the road; you see their rifles rise, their knives gleam. Tories in the garb of soldiers; their challenge rings out upon the night.

"Who goes there?"

But the white Indian does not reply. Hark! the crack of rifles; a cloud of smoke rolls round his form. He does not look behind, nor turn to either side; the bullet grazes the tiger skin about his breast, but the sacred parchment is safe. He dashes on, while the Tories, gazing upon his retreating form, hear the deep words—"The Camp of Washington!"

The moon goes down. Pale and dim, her disc, half seen, trembles over the distant woods, before it sinks to darkness. The night grows dark. We have lost sight of Wayaniko; ah the horse has fallen, the rider pants exhausted by the roadside! Is it so?

Look yonder through this gloom that gathers so dark before the break of day, and fix your eyes upon the summit of that steep hill. On one side a wood — you see it extend, a darkening mass. On the other a level field, overspread with waving wheat. A rude hut built among the trees, gives forth from its window a glare of light. The plain cottager has risen; he is about to begin his day's toil. He comes forth and stands before his home, a brawny man, with a coarse dress on his broad chest, the marks of toil upon his face.

But what sight is this that meets his eyes in the dimness of the daybreak hour?

Writhing in the roadside bank, his nostrils flooding the dust with blood, a noble white horse stretches out his limbs, raises his head, quivers along his flanks, and then is still.

Over him stands a form, which fills the rough laborer with awe. Into the hut he passes, returns with a light, shading its rays with the palm of his hand, he approaches, and beholds an Indian standing with folded arms beside the dying horse. The heart of a noble beast has burst — look! how its warm blood pours in a torrent over the road.

The Indian stands with folded arms, his head sunken and his eyes fixed upon the steed. As the cottager surveys that form, with the war blanket drooping from the shoulders, the coronal of feathers waving over the dark hair, he starts back with awe.

For the last time the dying horse lifts his

head and fixes his eye upon his master's form. Then all is over; he lays there dead.

The Indian turns ——

"The Camp of Washington?" he cries, with a voice that makes the cottager start.

"Look yonder!" exclaims the laborer, as the wind extinguishes his light.

There, from the summit of the hill, the Indian looks and sees, a wide expanse of waters heaving in the dim light of the day-break sky — a black mass, like a wall of ebony, extending along the distant horizon.

That expanse of waters, the waves of Manhattan Bay — that wall of ebony the City of New York.

"A boat? A canoe?"

"There aint none within three miles" — hesitates the cottager.

At once the resolution of the Indian is taken; at once he flings the blanket from his shoulders, the tiger-skin from his breast, and stands there naked to the waist, disclosing a form, magnificent in its broad chest and boldly defined muscles. He winds the parchment in the locks of his long straight hair; secures it with a cord; and while the plume waves over his brow, hurries to the river.

A footstep on the sand, a sudden plunge ——

Long before the threshold of his home, stood the cottager, watching that white plume gleaming from the blackness of the waves.

Through the shadows of a spacious chamber, struggled the rays of a taper, its waning light imparting a deeper gloom to the massive furniture, the cumbrous hangings and the curtained bed.

A man of some forty-five years, whose muscular limbs were clad in a long dark dressing gown, had sunk to sleep in an arm-chair, after many weary hours of labor. His hand resting on the table, still grasped the pen, which marked the unfinished sentence of his letter. By that hand a sheathed sword; over that table a mass of papers, bearing the name of great men and involving the fate of a nation.

And as this tired soldier slept, the light flickered lower in the socket, and the first gleam of day came through the parted curtains.

Suddenly a cry was heard, a tramp of a footstep! At the very instant the soldier awoke from his sleep, started to his feet, and listened. That footstep grew nearer, the door was flung open, a strange form stood on the threshold, bared to the waist, and dripping from the dark hair to the moccasioned feet with spray.

Yes it was a noble form, with bold features, and large eyes that now rolled wildly in their sockets. Over the brow of this strange apparition, waved a coronal of snow-white plumes.

The soldier started with surprise, and pressed his hands over his eyes, as though he be held the vision of a dream.

But the figure tottered forward, tore a parchment from the locks of his dark hair, and as he held it aloft, fell like a dead man to the floor.

The soldier bent down and grasped the parchment, and hurrying to the window, unclosed it before the first beam of the rising day.

By that beam of morning light, George Washington, with a quickening pulse and kindling eye, perused the Declaration of Independence.

—— And the same dawn that shone on his brow, shone through the cottage home by the still waters, on the sleeping form of the bride whose lips parted in a smile, as in a dream, she saw the dangers that had passed, the trials that had once darkened her life —

The Rose of Wissahikon.

LEGEND FOURTEENTH.

HERBERT TRACY

OR

THE LEGEND OF THE BLACK RANGERS:

A LEGEND OF "WASHINGTON AND HIS MEN" AT THE BATTLE OF GERMANTOWN.

THE SCENE OF THE ROMANCE.

The incidents of the battle of the fourth of October, 1777, the evolutions of the opposing armies, the characteristics of the American partizan chief compared with the British officer, the manner of the fight of Germantown, the scene, the people, and the actors, the self devotion of Washington, the daring feats of his compatriots — furnish the foundation, if not the superstructure of this Romance of Revolutionary History.

To those who know nothing about the matter, it may seem a very easy task, to mould a correct and graphic history of a battle-field of the Revolution, from the rough block of history, marred by paradoxes and disfigured by contradictions. Yet those who have trodden the path of revolutionary romance, which is now essayed by the author, will emphatically corroborate one important fact, which the reader will do well to remember — that the history of all our battle-fields is shadowed by mystery and darkened by doubt; that that there are innumerable contradictory narratives of a single event, that even the actors in the scenes of the American Revolution, have told varying stories of the great battles of the "eight years' war," described them in a conflicting manner, and in some instances covered the whole subject with darkness and obscurity.

With all these difficulties to encounter, the author has constructed the work now presented to the public. It is important for the reader to bear one prominent fact in remembrance. Thi work is not offered for perusal merely as an idle romance, but as a dramatic and legendary history of the battle, prepared from the details of various accredited written histories, the narratives of survivors of the field, as well as the thousand wild legends of the fight of Germantown, current in the vicinity of the battle-field.

It may not be impertinent to remark in this place that the first edition of this romance, was received, when published in six periodical numbers, in a standard journal, (*the Saturday Evening Post*) with popular favor as signal as it was unexpected. Extensively copied, it was returned to the author from all quarters of the Union, transferred into the columns of some of the most noted journals of the land.

This mark of popular favor induced a Philadelphia Publisher to offer the work to the public in a more substantial shape. It was published in book form in the spring of 1844. The edition has long since been exhausted.

It may be remarked that the work was mangled into Dramatic shape, by some adroit hireling of the Stage, and played upon the boards of the Philadelphia and New York Theatres, as an "*entirely original Drama.*"

— In the work entitled "The Fourth of July, 1776, or the Rose of Wissahikon," the reader surveyed the scenes of the Revolution, which took place in Philadelphia, and on the Wissahikon, in the year of the Declaration of Independence.

In Herbert Tracy, *or the Legend of the Black Rangers*, we once more take up the scenes of the Revolution. The scene of the story is again laid on the Wissahikon, and its main incident is the battle of Germantown. Thus, in one work, we trace the origin of the Declaration, and in the other, behold the sacrifice of blood, which was offered on the field of Germantown, in witness of its truth.

HERBERT TRACY,

OR,

THE LEGEND OF THE BLACK RANGERS:

A ROMANCE OF THE BATTLE OF GERMANTOWN.

BY GEORGE LIPPARD.

CHAPTER FIRST.

THE QUAKER AND HIS DAME.

"These be troublous times, dame — these be troublous times," said the Quaker as he took his pipe from his mouth, and drew his chair nearer to the cheerful flame which blazed upon the hearth. "The October night is cool — and verily, the fire is comfortable. I mind me not of a season, when the month opened with such a nipping frost — and yet the woods of the quiet Wissahikon are scarce faded by it. These are troublous times — does thee not think so, Hannah?"

"Yes, Joab," replied the Quaker dame, smoothing a crease out of her apron with her hand: "I do think that the times are full of trouble. What with the men of war, with their flaunting red dresses, with their war horses, their cymbals and their drums, their cannons and their weapons of war; our quiet home on the Wissahikon, is a quiet home no longer. But as the Lord wills it, so let it be!"

The Quaker farmer took his pipe from his mouth, sent a volume of tobacco-smoke rolling to the rafters of the apartment, and then with a distinct "hem" resumed his meditative luxury again.

"Verily, Joab, there is not a window of our habitation, from which we may look, without seeing the tents of these men of strife. Well do I remember the time when first thee took me to be thy wedded wife; then thee was used to go peacefully to the field, to thy labor in the morning, and I could bake my bread, and scour my pewter in quietness, without a great big, idle fellow of a soldier, popping into our tenement, and taking what he pleased for his own, and looking at our daughter Marjorie as though he meant no good. Well do I mind me of the time — but was thee not over to Germantown this afternoon, Joab?" The Quaker nodded assent. "Did thee hear anything new of the man Cornwallis, or aught of George Washington?"

"I found the village people much affrighted. Some were removing their worldly goods, some were talking loudly and calling their neighbors 'Whig' and 'Tory,' and all were running to and fro, in great confusion and bustle. I asked what all this meant — and verily the village people answered, that the man Cornwallis, who has posted his scarlet men across the village, near the mansion of friend Chew, to the Delaware on one side, and through our quiet woods along to the Wissahikon on the other, did purpose some mischief to the men of friend Washington. But I couldn't get head nor tail of the story. But of a certainty shall we have trouble shortly, Hannah."

"I fear thee speakest that which shall come to pass, Joab," replied the dame, and then both farmer and his wife appeared to give themselves up to the melancholy contemplation of the evils predicted. The whole scene was one of Pennsylvania's olden time. The light of the hickory fire, flickering around the apartment, showing the substantial forms of the Quaker and his dame, in bold relief, and mingling with the beams of the setting sun, which streamed through the deep silled window; the massive rafters which formed the ceiling of the spacious room; the snow-white walls and neatly sanded floor; the oaken table in one corner; the shelves heavy with masses of burnished pewter,— all were characteristic of that quiet, domestic life, so rarely discovered

in any place, save under the green trees and pleasant shade of the country.

The farmer was in the prime of vigorous manhood, with features of massive solidity, a broad and low forehead, a short, square nose, a wide mouth with thin lips, prominent chin, high cheek bones and a dark grey sparkling eye; and with a frame of great muscular power, long and sinewy arms, and prominent chest whose ample developement his Quaker garb, with all its volume, and want of shape, could not altogether conceal. You would have picked him out in a crowd, as the man to head a charge of dragoons, rather than suppose him the quiet Friend, whose theory and practice alike shunned the noise and bustle of war.

His dame was full and portly in figure, with a calm, placid face, and light blue eyes, expressive of a mild and domestic disposition. Her hair was half concealed, by the plain cap of the Quaker sect, and her gown was modelled with the invariable simplicity of hue and shape, peculiar to the sisters of the peace-loving and form-shunning society.

"In truth, Hannah," exclaimed Joab after a pause, as laying down his pipe, and extending his hands to receive the cheerful warmth of the flame, he gazed with a complacent glance around the spacious arch of the fire-place. "In truth, Hannah, we have fallen upon evil times. The sword of war hangs over the land, the dust of the highways is laid with the blood of our neighbors and worldy friends, and the quiet streams run crimson, with the butchery of the men of strife. This war parts father and son, husband and wife, mother and child."

"Yes," responded Hannah, from the other side of the fire-place. "There is the rich Englishman Tracy, whose mansion is pitched on the rock that looks down into the vale of the Wissahikon, beyond the bend 'tother side of Rittenhouse's Mill — did he not cast his son from him as though he were unworthy of all fatherly love and affection, because he favored the men of George Washington? Marry, Joab, I often wonder what has become of the poor youth, who hath his father's curse upon him?"

"I learned 'tother day, from some friends of Washington, that Herbert Tracy, that delicately reared youth, joined the Continentals last winter, with a number of his father's tenants; and I likewise learned that he endured the biting cold as bravely, and slept on the bare earth as cheerfully, as the humblest of Washington's people. The son of our neighbor — Henry Heft, commonly called Harry Heft, was with the young man Tracy."

The last sentence was uttered by the Quaker, with a covert glance at the countenance of his dame, as though he expected the name of the young farmer to excite some interest in her mind. He was not disappointed, for the Quakeress gave a quick, nervous start, and exclaimed, with the rapid and hurried manner peculiar to the keenest anxiety — "Joab, what didst thee hear of the young man Heft? Surely he has met with no harm? He was a good youth, albeit somewhat wild. Why did thee not tell me of this sooner? I should be sorry where harm to come to him, for, for —"

"For he hath made offers of marriage to our daughter Marjorie, thee would say? Nay, nay, dame, were he alive and well, standing at this moment before me, he might not unite his lot with our child. There was a time when I had hope of the boy, when I thought he would be one of us and assume the peaceful garb of the Friends — but no sooner did young Tracy go to the wars, than Harry must be off also, and fight, and cut and thrust, I warrant thee, with the worst of them. Nay, nay, Hannah —"

"Well, if it must be so, it must. I fear thee speakest truth. But in verity it is painful to think how much trouble and strife among kindred and friends, this dreadful war hath caused. There was the daughter of old Waltham, whose country seat is on the Ridge Road near the falls of Schuylkill; he is rich, and full of worldly goods thee knowest Joab: she, the maiden his daughter, was to be married to young Tracy, when the quarrel occurred between father and son, and the match was broken off. Ah, me! 'tis a troublous time, for the sons of men, Joab."

But at this moment, as if some unexpected thought had ruffled the usual serenity of his mind, the Quaker rose from his seat, and walked hurriedly to the deep silled window of the apartment looking to the west, and gazing

upon landscape of hill, valley and stream, for a moment he seemed lost in thought, or wrapt in the mild quietude, that attends the contemplation of a lovely sunset, to a mind sobered by age and experience.

CHAPTER SECOND.

THE MAIDEN.

The view was full of natural beauty. Immediately in front of the window extended a small flower garden, surrounded by a wicket fence, made lovely to the eye by groups of wild flowers of every tint and hue, green arbors, overshadowed by luxuriant vines, transplanted by a fair hand from the glades of the forest, and pleasant walks, and winding paths, separated from the flower beds by delicate lines of greenest grass, while a fair form flitting from arbor to arbor, might well have seemed the divinity of rural paradise. Beyond the garden, a sloping pasturage some hundred yards in extent, bounded on either side by forest trees, sank down in a gentle descent until its verdant turf was laved by the quiet Wissahikon ; which flowed silently on, from a mass of greenwood, along the verge of the meadow, under the shade of the trees on the opposite bank, until it was lost in the forest of verdure which terminated the view to the south. The opposite bank of the stream arose in a swelling hill, covered with lofty forest trees, the giant-trunked oak, the leafy chestnut, and branching beech, whose luxuriant foliage, but faintly tinged by the bright red, and glaring yellow of autumn, was basking in the mellowing light of the setting sun, as he hovered with half-concealed disc upon the brow of the woodlands. The sky was clear and serene, with light masses of clouds floating in the pathway of the sun. The whole western horizon was bathed in golden light, while the zenith expanded with its intensity of autumnal azure — like the dome of this fair temple of nature — far, far above, and there was a holy quietude, a twilight solemnity resting upon that world-hidden vale, that appealed to the highest and kindliest feelings of our nature.

The view was lovely, the foliage luxuriant, the sky serene, the meadow verdant as with the first kiss of spring, but neither view, foliage, sky nor pasturage, seemed to attract the attention of the farmer by reason of their more natural beauties, but rather from some association of memory, which fixed the valley of the Wissahikon as the scene of some well remembered incident of other days.

Joab gazed for an instant upon this scene, and then turning away with a hurried step, sought the other window of the apartment, which opened a view to the north. There were undulating hills and green woodlands and brown fields of upturned earth and white patches of ripe buckwheat, but upon hill top, and gleaming from the foliage of the forest, and dotting the russet of the cultivated fields with strips of white, extended the tents of the British camp, traversing as far as the eye could reach, the tract of country between the village of Germantown and the river Schuylkill, while at short intervals waved the Cross of St. George, stained with the best blood of the children of the soil ; and the hirelings of power, in their gaudy trappings, with their well burnished arms, were observed moving hither and thither along the line of the encampment. The view did not by any means seem to soothe the mind of the Quaker, into its usual quietude.

"I tell thee, wife, it is in vain — in vain!" he exclaimed again turning to the window looking out upon the Wissahikon. "I cannot stifle the remembrance. I stood here — here at this window, and saw him die — and yet I had a hand, a strong hand and stout arm, but I might not strike. I beheld him die ———"

"Of whom does thee speak, Joab?" asked dame Hannah, amazed at the excited demeanor of the staid Quaker. "Methinks thee is wondrously flurried, Joab!"

"Here I beheld him die. The son of the poor widow over the creek — that poor trumpeter boy in the American camp," he continued, his manner becoming more excited as he proceeded. "It was just such an evening as this, save that it happened in the bloom of spring. He had won his way through the hosts of the enemy — he had heard his mother was sick unto death — and he wished if she was indeed dying to close her eyes. He had won his way through the hosts of the enemy, he had gained this meadow, when thundering at his back came the scarlet men of war on their stout horses, with their flashing swords.

He shrieked for mercy and I heard his shriek, but might not, could not save him. He shrieked for mercy, and their swords were bathed in the warm blood of his heart. He was a fair youth, but 'twas a ghastly sight — that ruddy cheek crushed in the cold blood; those golden locks dyed in crimson red. Ah, 'twas a fearful sight — and — I — could not save him ———"

"In verity 'twas a most pitiful sight! The Lord have mercy on his murderers!"

"I could not — could not save him" —continued the Quaker. "But still I beheld him die!" He raised his eyes and hands to Heaven. "Father of mercy" —he exclaimed — "If blood crying from the earth to thee for recompense, is ever in thy wisdom avenged, surely the account of these scarlet men is deeply dyed, and cries for ten fold-vengeance! He was but a boy and yet they killed him!"

"'Twas a dreadful sight — a doleful sight," sobbed Dame Hannah. "In truth a doleful sight! The Lord be good to us, what is that?" she exclaimed, with an outburst of surprise, as a loud and piercing shriek arose from the garden without, and rang through the farm house.

The Quaker started quickly at the sound, but ere he had time to move a step or whisper a word, the sound of hurried footsteps was neard, the door of the apartment was flung hurriedly open, and a girl in the full summer of youth, rushed into the room, her dark hair floating in masses of jet, down over her neck and shoulders, and streaming in unconfined luxuriance over her virgin bosom, bared by the hand of violence. As she rushed into the room, she was followed by a coarse, ruffian-like man in the dress of a British dragoon, who with a drunken shout, and look of imbecile intoxication, had seized on the 'kerchief which veiled her bosom, and while she fled to her father's arms, pursued her footsteps.

"Save me! — Father — save me?" cried the maiden clinging to the farmer's neck.

"Come my pretty lassie — don't be afraid" —exclaimed the drunken soldier, as he sprang across the floor with unsteady steps. "Don't be afraid, lassie—don't ——"

"Come, feller, this is going a little too far" — exclaimed a strange voice, and a blow from behind felled the soldier to the oaken planks of the floor.

It was a good stout blow, and it laid the crimson-hued dragoon, as quietly down, as a new-born babe. The Quaker who had not time to raise a hand in defence of the maiden, glanced at the stranger and beheld the form of a young man in the prime of early manhood, of a strong, muscular and well proportioned frame, with a face full of honest intelligence of expression, lighted by the gleam of a dare-devil eye, and a look beaming with ingenuous frankness and manly courage.

"That's a nice specimen of the terror of turkey cocks!" exclaimed the stranger, eyeing the prostrated soldier, with a gaze of quiet admiration. "A nice pattern of a scare-crow to keep turkey gobblers out of the corn! Haint it, uncle Joab? What d'ye say, aunt Hannah? —did ever you see sich a beast?"

"Harry Heft!" exclaimed the maiden in surprise, while her cheek was pale from her recent fright. "Harry Heft!"

"Henry Heft! And in this warlike guise!" exclaimed the farmer, participating in the astonishment of his daughter.

"Why, Henry Heft! Where did thee come from?" said the dame, in a tone of quiet amazement, as her lips parted and her eyes distended with surprise.

The scene would have made a picture. The staid Joab, with his daughter resting on his right arm, while the other was raised in involuntary astonishment; the fair girl with her arms around her father's neck, her dark hair falling in disordered tresses over her shoulders and down her back, her face, with beaming eyes as dark as night, and dimmed by tears, turned toward the young soldier, while her bared bosom of virgin whiteness, and youthful outline, heaved upward in the light, and glowed with the warm flush that brightened over her face and neck; the dame slightly in the background with hands raised and eyes distended; and the young soldier in the foreground, unheeding the exclamations of surprise, but gazing downward, with his sparkling brown eyes, fixed in an expression of quiet humor, upon the form of the insensible dragoon, laid along the floor, in the careless attitude of

helpless intoxication; all formed a quiet picture for the pencil of John Smith, or any other artist of similar celebrity.

"Reely, jist to think of the feller's impudence!" exclaimed Harry Heft — "a'ter I'd travelled fifteen miles, over hill and holler, and through the red-coat lines, not at all mentionin' my creepin' down the Wissahikon to get cleer of the picquets — a'ter all this trouble to get a look at Marjorie there, and then when I reach the garden gate, to find that feller a-chaseing her about the flower beds jist as if he'd a right to catch butterflies where he liked!"

"But where did thee come from, Henry? How did thee git here? Isn't thee in danger? What does thee want?" where the hurried questions asked by the Quaker, who evidently knew not what to think of young Heft's sudden appearance.

"That's what I call unrollin' the whole catechism at once. Now uncle — I call you uncle, not because you're my father's brother, but because it sounds sociable, (the same to you, aunt,) jist set down there while I shut the door. There — it's bolted, now let me roll this sleepin' scarecrow under the table. Marjorie, dear, let me put your 'kerchief round your neck. There now — what's the use of blushing so — didn't I pay the scoundrel for his impu'dence? — Now all of you sit down 'round the fire-place, jist as we used to do in old times — Marjorie, you sit by me — uncle, you sit there, and aunt, you sit there. Now then I'll tell you all about it!"

"Henry, wherefore is thee in this warlike guise?" interrupted the Quaker.

"That's what I was jist a-going to tell you. But howsomever as I've precious little time to spare, I'll jist cut a long story short, and let you know, that I'm fresh from Geore Washington's army — which is not much farther off than the Skippack Creek, some sixteen miles distance from this farm house. (The Continentals may be a little nearer for all you know.) I'm on a scouting party — but p'raps you don't know what that is? You do uncle! very well."

"Where did thee go when thee left the Wissahikon last winter with young Herbert Tracy?"

"Why you must know that young Tracy raised a company of mounted riflemen, from round about the country here, with whom he joined the Continentals. He mustered some fifty good, bold-handed, stout-hearted fellows. This is our uniform — black frock coat, or rather dark grey — neat little rifle with a ball that never fails — short sword — powder horns — light boots — cap with the feather of a night-hawk in the way of a plume, and that's the reason why they call us the night-hawks, though our regular name is Captain Tracy's Rifles, or the Black Rangers. We fight sometimes one by one dropped about in spots, and most ginerally we slam into the Britishers all in a bunch, with our rifles cracking away, our plump black horses at the top of their speed, and our jolly war-hurrah splitting the air over our heads. We've seen hard fighting too — plenty of it. Twenty-six of our good band left their bones at Brandywine. By the Lord above us — "

"Henry, Henry! What saith the scripture? — Take not the name of — "

"I'm wrong, I know it. But these haint no times for men to be pertikler about what they say. But to the pint. I came as far as Chestnut Hill on a scouting party, and then I came on here, through the British lines, partly to see you folks here — partly to see my people over the creek, but more 'specially to reconnoitre round the mansion of our captain's father, jist below the Paper Mill Run. Captain Tracy thinks there's some mischief a brewing, and so I'll jist take a bit of something to eat if you please, and be off. What's that red-coat grumbling there about? He is the drunkenest — "

"If I mistake not," interrupted Joab, "he is the servant of a young British officer, who with Colonel Musgrave is at present staying at Mr. Tracy's down the Wissahikon."

"Hey, uncle! You don't say so! Then there's mischief brewin' indeed — Colonel Musgrave and old Tracy have always been as thick as thieves. It's my opinion that the captain's father is going to marry that Britisher's nephew of his to young Miss Waltham, who was betrothed to our captain before he joined the Continentals."

"Who is the nephew? I never heard him spoken of before, Henry."

"Why, his name is Wellwood Tracy — he's a Britisher born, and he's a leftenant

among the red-coats. Old Tracy says that he shall inherit his estate when he dies. There's a father for you, to cast off his natural born son — but what's that fellow grumbling about?"

"This way, this way," muttered the intoxicated dragoon, raising himself from the resting place under the table and gazing around with a vacant stare, which showed that his thoughts were not at all connected with the scene before him. "This way — parson — it isn't far. Two miles only along the Wissahikon. You know where old Tracy lives? They're to be married at eight o'clock — fine fun — plenty of drink — the leftenant's a glorious fellow. Hurrah — at 'em." And then the drunken soldier performed various imaginary feats, rode over imaginary regiments of Continentals, emptied imaginary bottles, and sang very peculiar songs, from a pocket volume of his own selection.

"Very well, my feller — very well," exclaimed Harry Heft, looking complacently at the muttering soldier. "Very well — that's jist what I wanted to know. See here, Marjorie."

Drawing the blushing girl apart, Harry whispered in her ear, in a low voice, words which gave a brighter sparkle to her dark black eyes, and brought a livelier blush upon her budding cheek.

"What d'ye think o' the plan, Marjorie?"

"Verily," replied the damsel, "verily, Harry, I think," she continued hesitatingly. "That is I like it very well, but, — but," the rest of her reply was lost in a whisper.

"Henry, what did thee say to our daughter?" exclaimed the sedate Quaker. "Really, it seemeth to me —"

"Never mind, uncle — nothing wrong — nothing wrong. Hist! there is the signal of my comrade down in the hollow. I must be off, but I'll not say good bye, for dead or alive, you'll hear from me soon. Now for old Tracy and old Waltham!"

As he said this the young Ranger seized his rifle from the fire-place and rushed out of the room, as a clear shrill whistle was heard without, leaving the black-eyed Marjorie to explain the purport of those whispered words as best she might

The plan of my story makes it necessary to picture to the reader two distinct scenes or incidents which occurred on the same evening of the commencement of the tale, at the hour of sunset in the country around the village of Germantown. Now for the first incident.

CHAPTER THIRD.

THE BLACK RANGERS.

As the last gleam of sunset glanced through the foliage of a long line of towering elm and chestnut trees, whose luxuriant verdure marked the course of a winding bye road, some three miles north of Chestnut Hill, a party of soldiers were pursuing their way, under the interlacing boughs, that made a pastoral arcade of the serpentine line, and shielded their path and persons from any intrusive observer.

The soldiers, numbering twenty-five in all, were mounted each on a stout and well-limbed steed, black in hue, with flowing tail and mane. Their tall and sinewy forms were clad in a costume which, peculiar to their body, would have marked them out for observation amid the gaudy trappings of an army. They wore black coats, reaching to the knee, and fitting closely over their prominent and muscular chests, and varied in appearance by a border of black fur around the skirt of the garment, with a plain line of braiding running up in front, until it was terminated by the simple upright collar, buttoning closely round the neck. A belt of dark leather, from which depended a powder horn, was slung across the breast; another belt of similar material girdled the waist, supporting the scabbard of a short straight sword; while a glittering hunting knife, with handle of the wild deer's antlers, depended from the right side; and a small rifle, with barrel of elegant finish and stock of mahogany, varied by ornaments of silver, hung at the saddle-bow of each soldier. Each mounted rifleman wore a small circular fur cap, with a feather of the night-hawk, drooping to the left side, in the way of a plume. Their legs were encased as far as the knees, in well fitting black boots, displaying the manly proportions of each muscular leg, the bend below the knee, the prominent calf and sloping ankle, to every advantage.

Every man of the party was tall, broad chested, and well proportioned, and every one

bore upon his rugged features, the marks of the bayonet thrust, the sword cut, and the bullet wound. They were such men as would have delighted the heart of a crusading knight of the thirteenth century, with all the wild love of adventure — all the daring courage, and all the frank, hardy qualities which mark the soldier, who — as the old writer phrases it — "fights for his own hand" independent of the numbers and discipline of a regular army. And then they sat their steeds so well, so gallantly; each ranger riding firm and erect, adapting his limbs to the movement of his horse, and guiding him without having any recourse to the bridle.

It would have been no easy matter to have picked men of such form, strength, and stature, from a regiment of common soldiers, yet the leader of the Black Rangers, who rode at their head, was, to all appearance, as much superior in all these, as well as many other qualities to his own gallant band, as they were superior to the promiscuous gatherings of an army.

Tall in stature, with a form moulded with the outline of physical power, softened by the gentler proportions of manly grace, with a manner that marked him out from the mass of common men, a face warmed with the glow of youth, yet impressed with the indelible lines of thought, Herbert Arnheim Tracy was in every point of view worthy of his reputation (won in the short compass of a year) of being one of the bravest among the brave, the first in the storm, the foremost in the charge, the most tireless in the pursuit — as obnoxious to the enemy in the retreat as in the chase.

His face impressed the observer with a high idea of the intellect expressed in each lineament. His forehead, high and pale, and bearing the wrinkles of thought, was relieved by his raven black hair, which fell in luxuriant locks almost to his shoulders. His eyes, of that deep and thoughtful blackness which is ever accompanied by strong mental powers, shone like flame-coals from under his strongly marked and arching eyebrows, with a clear, steady glance, that told of old memories stirring up within him, and prospects of the dim future agitating the abysses of his soul. His nose was small and Grecian, his mouth a thought too wide, with thin, expressive lips; his chin was small, prominent, square, and decided in its outline, while the general contour of his face was in harmony with the regular lines of manly beauty.

As to his dress, he wore the uniform of his band, the black frock coat, edged with fur; boots of the same hue; a small sword was suspended from his left side; a hunting knife was inserted in his belt, and a small chain of burnished steel passed over his left shoulder, supported a light hunting horn of silver, rimmed with gold, which ever hung ready for immediate use under his right arm. In place of the feather of the night-hawk worn by his men, his cap wore in front a long drooping plume of eagles' feathers, which fell to one side, and mingled with the luxuriant locks of his raven hair.

Could you have looked into Herbert Tracy's mind as he then rode along the sequestered lane, at the head of his gallant band, you would have discovered many a bitter thought sweeping athwart the surface of his soul, mingling with many a memory of the olden time, many a dreary imagining of future doom, and many a thought of those he loved, who loved him not, and many a musing of *one* who returned his affection with a deep and burning passion.

A dream — a bright reverie — of his early days was now present with his fancy, and the sunny glades and the shady recesses of the Wissahikon were again around him, and again he wandered through the forests that overlooked the world-hidden stream, arm in arm with that father, from whose heart and home he was now a stranger and an outcast.

And then came the memory of the bitter day, when that father's curse rang in his ears.

There was the small library-room in which the dreamings of his boyhood had been fed with additional fancies from the perusal of the volumes of history and of romance. The dull light of a November day came through the solitary window of the apartment, and again, with words of eloquent persuasion, his father, by birth an Englishman, and a Loyalist from principle, endeavored to convince his son of the truth of the cause of Royalty, and of its intimate connection with his future pursuits and expectations.

For, after a life of voluntary exile from his native land — after burying his mind and talents

for years amid the shades of the Wissahikon, while his heart was eating itself away with deep broodings of one of the last descendants of an honored line, condemned to comparative penury, Major Herbert Wallingford Tracy found himself suddenly placed by the death of various intermediate heirs, but one remove from the Earldom of Wallingford, whose domains were located in one of the fairest counties of England, where his ancestors had lived and flourished since the Conquest. On the death of the present aged and childless Earl, Major Tracy would become Earl of Wallingford, and his son, whose strong, innate powers, he had often noted with all a parent's love, would, after his decease, succeed to the title and estates of the ancient house, to add, as the father hoped, renewed glory and increased honor to the records of the venerable line.

But all his hopes, the hopes of a bold, a strong-minded, and worldly ambitious man, soured by the disappointments of youth into a misanthrope, were met at the very outset, by the candid and fearless declaration of his son, that he could not draw his sword against the land that gave him birth.

And then, wound up to the pitch of madness, by this utter prostration of all his ambitious dreams—for Major Tracy had thought to win royal favor for his son, by the devotion of his influence to the cause of royalty—the father raised his hand to heaven, and, with unquivering lip and steady eye, cursed that son of all his hopes, and then thrust him, like an unclean thing, from the home of his infancy and the side of his betrothed. Her father, Mr. Waltham, had refused to consummate the marriage of his daughter with an outcast, and pour his well filled coffers at the feet of one, who was a rebel in his opinion—not to his majesty George the Third—but, what was a matter of much greater importance, "to the rich Squire of Waltham"—a rebel to all that was high and holy in religion or nature—a rebel to Loyalty, Respectability, and Wealth. In other words, in his eyes Herbert Arnheim Tracy was a poor man.

When Herbert departed from the mansion of his infancy, it was with the determination to join the banner of Washington. A small fortune bequeathed to him by a distant relative in Philadelphia, which he was now enabled to claim, having just attained his majority, afforded him the means of fitting out a band of brave farmers' sons, who had known him from his infancy, and other gallant spirits, and embodying them in a band which soon became widely known as Captain Tracy's Mounted Rifles, the Night Hawks or the Black Rangers.

In less than a year he had gained honor and renown, and now, after an absence from the home of his childhood of that duration, he found himself returning toward the wilds of the Wissahikon, with the thought of his father's curse hanging heavy over his soul, and dismal forebodings of the future fate of his betrothed, giving a melancholy tinge to all his feelings and fancies.

His meditations were interrupted by the voice of a war worn veteran at his side. He was a soldier of a quarter of a century's growth, and had served under Braddock in the old French war.

"We shall have warm work of it to-morrow, Capt'in."

"Aye, Sergeant, we shall have warm work, most certainly."

"Trust our band will remember our trumpeter boy, Capt'in."

"He who was murdered some months since you mean! Our band of gallant fellows will never forget the massacre of the young trumpeter, Sergeant Brown. How far do you think we are from the British Camp, Sergeant?"

"'Bout five miles, Capt'n; three miles to Chestnut Hill, and two from thence to Chew's House, which I larn is the location of the Britishers 'campment."

"It must be about five miles, then, to the Paper Mill Run on the Wissahikon?"

"Jist the same, Capt'in."

"Do you think it will be possible, Sergeant, to pass the British lines and reach the Run within an hour's time?"

"Possible and impossible, Capt'in, jist as you take it. If you take the bed of the Wissahikon, and pass the Britishers under cover of the brushwood, 'long side of it—that's what I call possible, and you'll succeed. If you try any other way—that's what I call impos-

sizle, and you'll not succeed, but you'll get shot. But what is that thing bowin' and scrapin' yonder?"

Herbert looked in the direction pointed out by the Sergeant, and discovered a singular figure, bowing and posturing after a most curious fashion, at the distance of some twenty paces, directly in the centre of the lane, in front of the Rangers' path. On approaching nearer to this singular figure, it resolved itself into a short broad-shouldered negro, with an exceedingly large black face, flat nose, thick lips and prominent chin, large eyes with very small pupils, and very large "whites;" hips and shin-bones of tremendous prominence, feet of colossal size, and general figure as grotesque in outline, and as ludicrous in proportion, as though Nature herself had turned caricaturist, and manufactured a walking libel upon the whole monkey tribe.

"Massa Herbet, Massa Herbet" — exclaimed the negro, making a profound bow as the Rangers approached — "If dat ar be you jest say so, for gorra-mighty, Lord bless us, dis nigger am tired — dat am a fac. I'b been hunting you, eber since yesterday mornin,' way up to de Skippack creek, sixteen miles from here, as true as my name am Charles de Fust, and I hab'ent found you till dis berry instant. De berry debbil's to pay at home, *and* no pitch hot"

"Why, Charley! is that you!" cried Captain Tracy, as he recognized one of his father's domestics in the negro, "what message have you for me? Who sent you?"

"Dar's de message I hab for you, and Miss Marian Waltham sent me. True as my name's Charles de Fust."

Herbert took the carefully folded note from the hands of the negro, and, with a quickening pulse recognized the handwriting of his betrothed in the simple direction — "To Captain Herbert Arnheim Tracy." With a nervous hand he broke open the seal, and read —

October 2, 1777.

Dearest Herbert — I am in great distress, and hemmed in by the most fearful dangers. If you have any regard for our mutual love, our mutual fate, come to me; come to me as soon as you have read these lines. Nothing but your presence can avert the fate of —

Your betrothed, Marian.

"God of Heaven!" exclaimed Tracy, as his cheek grew for a moment lividly pale — "the letter is dated yesterday, and yet, Charles you have failed to deliver it until this moment. Tell me, sirrah," he continued, raising himself in his stirrups, as his eye flashed with anger — "Wherefore this neglect? Answer me truly, or by the next tree and a strong cord shall be yours!"

"Gorra-mighty, Lord bless, sure as my name's Charles de Fust," stammered the negro, half frightened out of his wits as he stood bowing in front of Herbert's horse. "Massa Herbert, what's de use ob workin' yusef in a passhun? Dese am de facts ob de case. Two days ago, Massa Waltham, who libs on de Ridge Road, come ober to Major Tracy's on a visit. Brought Miss Marian wid him — and de old fellow was seized by paralytic stroke while at the Major's — t'ought he was going to die — den him and your fader make up match between his darter and dat red coat scamp, Lefienant Wellwood Tracy. Under dem circumstances Miss Marian dispatch me off wid dis note for you. Went up to de Skippack — couldn't find you dar. De sed you was gone out a scouting. Been a follering you up eber since — and here I be, and dere you are, and Miss Marian's goin' to be married to dat renegate dis ebenin'. So if you gwain to do anything, you better do it mighty dam quick. Sure's my name's Charles de Fust."

"Sergeant," cried Herbert, turning hurriedly to the veteran Brown, who rode at his elbow. "You know the place of rendezvous? The deserted mansion among the copse of horse chestnut trees, about a quarter of a mile hence?"

"The place is called the Haunted House?"

"The same. Let the Rangers disperse in every direction in search of intelligence as regards the force, numbers, and position of the enemy. We meet again at twelve to-night at the Haunted House. It is now dark — disperse the Rangers, Sergeant!"

The Sergeant touched his hat, and presently the Rangers were seen dispersing in various directions. "Charles de Fust" was left standing alone with the Captain.

"They have a desperate game to play," Herbert muttered in a whisper, that came

through his clenched teeth. "She is mine — mine by all that is sacred. Wo be to him who shall say me nay! — By the God that lives — "

The oath was scattered to the air, and the astonished negro beheld Herbert plunging the spurs into the sides of his ebon steed, who swept through field and meadow with the speed of wind, and in an instant was lost in the shades of a neighboring forest.

"Dat am berry perlite! Berry! To leave me all alone here in de middle ob de road. Berry perlite; — Gorra-mighty, Lord bless us — sure's my name's Charles de Fust."

CHAPTER FOURTH

THE BETROTHED.

She gazed upon that gorgeous sunset, the beautiful girl! She gazed from the arching window of her chamber, at the setting sun, with her beaming face flushed into brighter radiance by the last glimpse of daylight — her blue eyes dimmed with tears — her warm lips, parted by the rising sigh — and her golden hued hair, floating in glossy richness down each cheek, and along her neck, and finally resting in beautiful disorder upon that virgin bosom with its veins of azure and its outline of youth and bloom

The beauty of Marian Waltham was of that fascinating character which so finely and delicately blends the spiritual with the material, and charms the beholder with a glance, a look, or a tone; which enchains the fancy with every motion and attracts the imagination in every attitude, throwing the golden light of romance around the fair form — giving a brighter glance to the eye, a lovelier hue to the velvet cheek, and a winning sweetness to the tone, which seems to convey every idea of the hidden soul that words of human speech may fail to utter.

Lovely as Marian was at all times, she certainly never seemed more beautiful than on this eventful evening, when gazing at the last beams of sunset, from the window of her spacious chamber, situated in the western wing of Major Tracy's mansion, among the heights of the Wissahikon.

Her face, raised gently upward, received on each glowing cheek, the soft flush of sunset; her eyes, large blue and lustrous, half closed in dreaming thought, were glittering through their tears; her mouth, with its small lips curving with a fascinating fulness, was slightly opened with the listlessness of reverie, around her Grecian head, along each blooming cheek, and over her neck and shoulders, streamed the luxuriant locks of her hair, whose bright and silky gold, glistening in the sunbeams, completed the fascination that hovered round her beauty like a veil of light.

Her bust was ample, well proportioned, and swelling in its outline, yet delicately formed and full of virgin beauty; her waist small and tapering, yet without any appearance of unnatural confinement or artificial restraint; while from her waist downward the proportions of her figure fell in a voluptuous sweep, which gave indefinable fascination to every motion of those small and softly chiselled feet, whose fairy tracery of form peeped from beneath the snow-white folds of the bridal robe.

And those arms, full, fair, and rounded with the floating line of grace, bared from the shoulder with their beauty gleaming through the bewitching sleeves of air-like lace, and the delicate hands with miniature fingers half clasped in front supporting the golden bracelet, which the maiden was about to entwine around that wrist which needed no such garish ornament; all these charms — the face, the floating hair, the half thoughtful, half dreaming attitude, the air of winning innocence, the innocence that implies ignorance of the world's customs which encircled the maiden's features, — all combined, made her seem to the fascinated eye, pure as she was, a being to be loved with all the depth of the passion that springs from a high intellect.

Marian turned from the bright sunset and gazed around her chamber. Ever since the intimate friendship of Major Tracy and Squire Waltham had given rise to frequent visits to the mansion of the former, this chamber had been set apart for Marian and furnished to her taste. The furniture was attractive without being gorgeous. The chamber looked precisely the same as on the day when the fair Marian first retired within its precincts to muse on the gallant youth, who had saved her life, endangered by a frightened horse, which rushed with herself and father over a precipice, and plunged them in the waters of the Wissahikon. She

even now imagined the noble form of Herbert, confronting the maddened horse, and when his efforts to stay the speed of the animal were in vain, again the picture was colored by her fancy, how gallantly he sprang into the depths of the rivulet and drew her fainting form and that of her dying father to the shore. All this, and the subsequent scenes, the confession of his love, her acknowledgement of a mutual passion, and the betrothal — arose to her vivid fancy, and the maiden dashed her father's marriage present, the gaudy bracelet, to the floor, and covering her face with her hands, she sought relief from the pressure of thought in a flood of tears.

Her attention was attracted by the sound of a footstep, and a low voice whispered her name.

She looked up and beheld her father. His frame was thin and attenuated with disease, his shoulders bent forward with premature old age; slight masses of grey hair, falling from under his invalid's cap, strayed along each sunken cheek, affording a fearful relief to the pale hue of that face, with the features, distorted by pain, the eye glassy, the lip shrunken, and the brow contracted.

"Daughter, you are in tears," said Mr. Waltham, laying a thin and withered hand upon Marian's shoulder. "What must be, must. I have planned this marriage, Marian, with an eye single to thy happiness—" he paused, for a violent fit of coughing choked his utterance.

"When I am no more, Marian, you will need a protector. Lieutenant Wellwood Tracy—"

Marian turned her head away, and concealed her face in her hands, at the name.

"Nay, Marian, wherefore start you thus? Is not the Lieutenant nobly born, and gallantly bred! Has he not wealth; is not his name enrolled among the honored and respected of the world?"

"Father! My troth is plighted to another!" exclaimed Marian in that decided voice which betokens the firmness of despair—"My troth is plighted to another."

"An outcast and a beggar!" exclaimed a strange voice, and the tall form of Major Tracy stood between the father and daughter—"An outcast and a beggar!" he continued, as a smile of mingled contempt and scorn curved his lips. "Your troth is pledged to another forsooth? Why, Marian, I had thought better of you than this? What! would you stoop to marry an outcast from his home, a rebel to his king, a man who has drawn his sword in Treason and by the unsheathing of that sword, blasphemed his God? Would you marry a *beggar*, fair maiden?"

As he said this Major Tracy's brow became contracted with a dark frown, and then his lip trembled with an expression of contempt. His appearance was full of majesty, with his tall form and erect bearing; and his high pallid brow, seared by the wrinkles of worldly care and ambitious thought, was shown in bold relief, as the last glow of sunset fell on its bold outline, with the dark hair, sprinkled with the frost of age, thrown back in careless disorder.

But the fair maiden quailed not before his glance. Stung by his taunts into a reply, she raised her form to its full stature, and with her blue eye, flashing with a steady unvarying glance, and with her fair arm outstretched, she exclaimed in a quiet tone—

"Can a *father* speak thus of his *son?*" she exclaimed, "can a father so far forget all feelings of natural affection, as to curse, with bitter words and sneering manner, the child, whom he is bound, by every law of God and man, to love and protect? Not thus does a maiden speak of her betrothed husband! No! Though Herbert were a beggar, clad in rags and banned by the unjust opinion of the world, though he labored under the bitterest curse that ever rose to the lips of an unjust, a passionate parent, still would I wed him, banned and cursed, though he were, aye, cheerfully and joyfully would I wed him, and as Truth lives in heaven, I will wed none—"

"Hold, Marian, hold, for my sake!" shrieked her father, raising his attenuated hands, with a voice that seemed prophetic of his anticipated home—the grave—"Marian, pause for your father's sake!"

The words died on the maiden's lip, the flush of momentary excitement passed from her beaming features, her eye lost its flashing glance, her form its erect stature, her arm fell listlessly by her side, and Marian forgot the vow of eternal constancy to her lover, when

she beheld, standing before her, the weak and attenuated form of her father, trembling on the verge of the grave, with his eyes, dimmed by disease, warmed into the momentary glance that appealed with such silent eloquence to the holiest feelings of a daughter's heart.

She sank weeping at his feet, and clasped his withered hands, as she wept.

"You will consent, my daughter?" he whispered, "You will gratify your poor, fond father."

Marian murmured a few broken words and Major Tracy stood regarding the father and daughter with a glance of mocking triumph as he muttered. "Now this brave son of mine shall know the man he has defied! Wellwood shall have the bride and the lands, and when the *rebel* has met his deserts, Wellwood succeeds to the Earldom! Miss Waltham," he continued aloud, "I had well nigh forgot the object of my errand hither. Lieutenant Wellwood Tracy has just arrived, and with as little delay as may be, after the fatigue of travel, will hasten to pay his respects to his fair bride!"

CHAPTER FIFTH.

THE BRIDEGROOM.

A STATELY array of silver candelabra, placed on the mantel, and containing tall formal wax candles, threw a glaring light around the antiquated parlor, with its massive mirrors, its Turkish carpeting, its wainscoted walls, adorned with paintings, its old fashioned sofa, and high backed mahogany chairs.

A young man of some twenty-three years, attired in the uniform of an officer in the British dragoons, lay extended on the sofa in an attitude of the most elegant disorder. His legs enveloped in Hessian boots, shining with spurs and spattered with mud, carelessly crossed, his head with its powdered locks resting upon one arm, with his face to the ceiling, he seemed intently engaged in examining the merits of his chapeau, with its mass of feathers, which his other hand held poised directly over his face. He was not an unhandsome man, but there was an air of effeminacy about his small, delicate features, and the jaunty air of every position assumed by his slender and well-proportioned figure, that gave you an idea you stood in the presence of the fashionable fop, the man of the world of idlers, the "dawdler" at ladies' elbows, the talker of small sayings, the coiner of compliments, and smatterer of little pieces of all kinds of knowledge, which combined together form what the mass call *a* gentleman, always provided the combination of so many rare qualities is well dressed.

And Wellwood Tracy was no dull fellow either. A few summers at Oxford had given him some idea of the existence of Greek and Latin, and he was sufficiently acquainted with them to know that these words meant languages, not celebrated philosophers. A winter in London, passed amid the excitement of balls, *routes*, *soirees*, and the thousand other assemblages of the gay world, had given him some idea of life, and instilled into his mind that fashionable code of morals, which places the winning of a game at cards, and the destruction of a woman's virtue, on a scale of perfect equality in the list of innocent pleasures and venial sins with all these acquirements, and a genteel way of saying large oaths and dainty imprecations, Lieutenant Wellwood Tracy was voted by the world in general, and his messmates in particular, to be a deuced clever fellow, a finished gentleman, in every way worthy of succeeding to the Earldom of Wallingford, in case the intermediate heirs should happen to vacate this scene of trial and care.

The Lieutenant had just counted each feather in his chapeau for the twelfth time, when the door opened, and a servant informed him that his chamber was ready for his use, where he might remove from his person the dust, disorder and dishabille of travel.

"Now for my bridal robes," lisped the gallant dragoon, as he tumbled from the sofa into an erect position. "I wonder where that cursed *valet* of mine is staying all the time? What detains the village priest? Well—well [looking at his watch] it's near the hour, and I've just time to dress. A fellow can be married but once—it's best to submit with a good grace, so here goes for the mysteries of the toilet—and then she's handsome and rich, and I may one day be Earl of Wallingford!"

Disappointment is the great misery of life—success the great blessing. Which of the two

shall be the lot of the gallant Lieutenant Wellwood Tracy of His Majesty's dragoons?

CHAPTER SIXTH.

THE VALLEY OF THE WISSAHIKON.

When Harry Heft left the farm-house of the Quaker, in obedience to the invisible signal, the new moon, with its delicate crescent of silver, poised in the clear azure of the western horizon, was shedding around over the woods and stream of the Wissahikon, a shower of softened light, which danced on the prominent points of the foliage, sparkled along the rivulet, and waved in threads of radiance through the open glades and shadowed recesses of the forest.

Having passed through the small garden, in front of the farm-house, the young soldier brushed aside the grass of the meadow, heavy with dew, and pursued his way toward the Wissahikon, which murmured through the stillness, its thousand tiny ripples, brightening in the kiss of the moonbeams.

"Well, may I die the death of a spy" — exclaimed Harry as he reached the banks of the stream, and gazed around — "May I die the death of a riglar built renegate, if this aint purty. I never did see my native stream look so nice afore — and now that I think of it, I'd like to visit my old folks; but I haint got time. I must get that purty gal out of the clutches o' them Britishers at Major Tracy's, and then I kin sit down and play if I like, but not afore. But where in the name of the Continental Congress is that feller Dennis? Dennis O'Dougherty, McDermott, McDonough, McDaniel, Mac——"

"Mac Divil!" answered a voice from a clump of elder bushes, within arm's-reach of Heft. "And is it callin' a man, dacent and civil, out o' his name, at this solemn hour of the night, ye are, ye spalppayn? Is this yer pe'liteness, Harry Heft"— continued the voice, as the bushes rustled, and a small round face, with a very small, and very bright pair of grey eyes, long upper lip and short nose, emerged from the foliage. "Is this yer pe'liteness I say? I'm ashamed of ye, Harry Heft."

The face gradually rose from among the bushes, and presently a tall, stout figure, clad in the uniform of the Black Rangers, leaped out on the turf, and in an instant was at the side of Harry Heft."

"I'm ashamed of ye, Harry Heft"— said the Irishman, with a grave look, and with a merry sparkle in his eye. "By the ghost of Fin-macoul, of St. Patrick, St. Pater, and a half dozen more of the rispictable old jintlemen, who raised petaties in ould Erin afore the curse of Cromwell and King George was put upon her sod, I'm ashamed of ye, Harry — there now ye pesky critter," he continued, for long residence among the people of the northern Provinces had spiced the brogue of Dennis McDermott, with a little dash of the Yankee dialect. "There now ye pesky critter, are ye satisfied?"

Harry burst into a peal of laughter, and exclaimed between tthe bursts of merriment —

"Look here, Irish, somebody must a-been drying your primin' before a hickory fire — you go off at such very short notice. Why you explode at about the eighth fraction of half-cock. Why, Irish, you're gitting quite animated — if you'd *only* take a'ter me something might be made out of you. You *are* a reg'lar old boy!"

"Jest call me by me christen name, Dennis, will ye? Or pr'aps ye'd like yer picter spilt?"

"No, thank'ee not jist now," replied Harry, catching the quiet twinkle of the warm-hearted Irishman's eye. "But come along, Dennis. Let's ford the creek and pass on; we've got about a mile to go, and the sooner we're movin' the better."

The Rangers waded the stream, which was not more than breast high, at this point, and taking a beaten track on the western side, proceeded southward at a rapid pace for about five minutes. After walking under the shade of the wood, the path emerged into an open field, covered with blackberry bushes, brambles, and wild vines, trailing along the ground, with heaps of newly cut timber, scattered over the surface of the uncultivated earth. The field was passed and the Rangers arrived at a spot of singular beauty.

The Wissahikon entered a deep ravine or glen — if either of these names are appropriate — where the banks arose by an ascent in some places gradual, in other points abrupt, into high and massive hills, clothed from the sparkle of the ripple, to the deep blue of the

sky, with most luxuriant trees, with foliage faintly dyed by autumn, of every gradation of fantastic outline of form, every variety of light and shade. Here swelling into pyramids of leaves, silvered by the moonbeams; there sloping away into shady nooks; at one point sweeping down to one brooklet by a gentle descent of chestnut trees, in all the towering height of a century's growth, succeeded by tender saplings, whose leaves were interwoven with those of many a green shrub and verdant bush growing by the water side, and dashing their verdure in the waves of the deep, clear, mirror-like flood; at another point, circling around some perpendicular mass of rock, whose clefts were green with many a wild vine, the foliage sank gradually from the sky to the stream, with a leaf here and there touched by the moonlight, while all the rest was indistinct and dark.

The stream, winding through the glen, with its deep waters of glassy clearness, reflected the ascending steps on either side, and the small space of the clear blue sky, which these heights viewed from the vale below, permitted to be seen, with so faithful an outline, and such a delicate mass of hues and tints, lights and shades, that it seemed as though the landscape beneath the waters was an ideal and spiritual copy of the real and living landscape above.

The path which our Rangers pursued, led along the water's edge, and wound among the colossal trunks of wide-branching oaks, whose roots had been striking deep, and whose limbs had been growing stronger for hundreds of years. As they wended along with the silver murmur of the stream filling the air, and the soft moonlight floating amid the waving foliage, the Rangers for a time, under the influence of the holy silence of the hour, ceased all conversation. With their footfalls echoing along the wood, and the occasional rustling of leaves as they brushed through a mass of shrubbery opposing their path, they pursued their way, until the murmuring of a waterfall told them of their vicinity to Rittenhouse's mill—a massive stone building, which rose in strong relief, its grey walls standing boldly out against the background verdure, while a number of cottages, barns, and outhouses, were scattered around it on the eastern side of the artificial cascade.

The Rangers paused for a moment upon a shelving rock, and looked back into the lovely glen, which they were about to leave.

"Och, comrid, Harry Heft," said the Irishman, breaking the silence which had lasted for a quarter of an hour. "Sure this beautiful spot, with its feathery trees, and soft moonlight, and its quietness and solemnity, brings to mind the place ov me birth, wid the little hut, and its green turf on the bank of the Lake Killarney! The curse o' God be on the tyrant who driv me frum me home! Is it blubberin' ye are, Harry Heft?"

The young American Ranger certainly showed no signs of weeping, but Dennis merely meant the insinuation as an excuse for the tear which stole from his own eyelid, and washed his scarred and sunburnt cheek.

"What did the British drive you from your home for?" exclaimed Harry, participating in the Irishman's outburst of long-hidden sympathies.

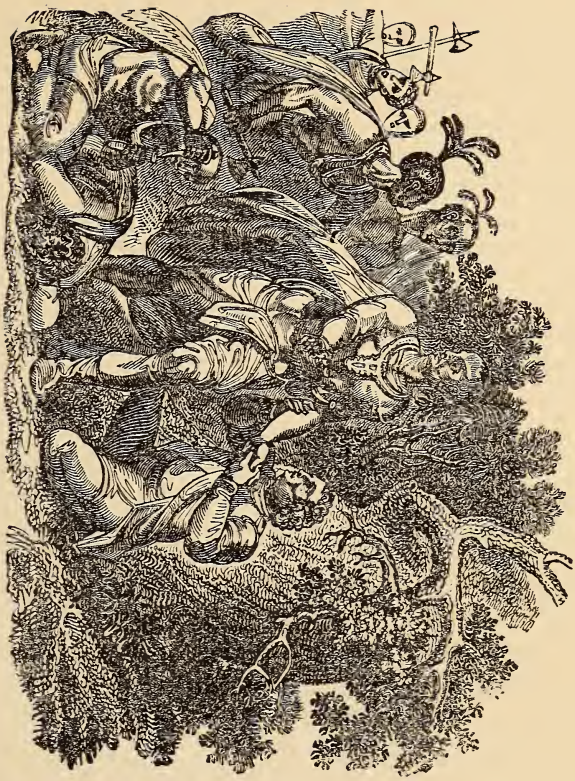
"Ye've seen a tear in my eye, Harry Heft, and you may as well make a note ov it; for none 'll you iver see there agin. The why and wherefore I left me native country is a long story, Harry Heft; but ye must know, Harry, that meself and me mother, and the wife and the childer, (not forgetting the pig, be jabers,) lived in the nate little shealing on the banks of the Killarney, and not a care did we know, mair be token we had plenty o' petaties, until the red-coated Britishers came and meddled wid a little still ov me own—"

"*Still?* Whiskey still?" inquired Henry.

"The same. A little bit ov a hand machine to manyfactur' the poteen, ye know. The sodjers came, and we had a taste ov a ruction, and I giv one of the rascals the 'unlucky blow,' not maneing it at all, at all; but flattened out he was, and it was I that did it."

"You sarved him right! Confound the Britishers, I say!"

"Amen to that. And then they giv me the choice ov the gallows or the dragoon's saddle, for they saw I was a stout, tall felley (fellow) ov me inches, and I chosed the gallows. But the wife clung to me bosom, and the childer clung to me knees, and pursuaded wid their tears, that sed so much more than words, to 'list, sooner than be hanged, and 'list I did, sorrow to me soul! And I've never seen wife or childer since."



INDIAN MASSACRE.

The Irishman brushed a tear from his eye, and Harry was seized with a sudden fit of whistling.

"Aye! Whistle, Harry, whistle! It's better to whistle nor to weep, and if I did'nt laugh sometimes my heart 'ud break for the grief that's tugging at it. Ochone, Erin Mavourneen — I'm making a judy ov meself."

"How long is it since ye listed, Dennis!"

"Ten years or thereabouts. We came to Montreal, and seen some service among the French and Injins, and on one occashun, a party of us dragoons were dispatched all the way to Detroit, and the whole kit ov us, barrin' two others besides meself, were riddled by the red skinned Injins. We three survivors picked up our bones and walked off about our business, each on his own petikeler way, for we didn't see any necessity of our returning to Montreal and the barracks, or pushing on to Detroit with its wild cats and Injins."

"And then you pushed eastward and settled down about Germantown here?"

"And here I've lived and wrought for near five years, until Captain Tracy, and a likely boy he is too, tipped me the wink, and then I followed him to the wars, and maybe I haven't been a bad thorn in the side of the Britishers?"

"A regular splinter in their sore-foot, as one might say. But should any of your former comrades see you again, think they'd know you?

"It's difficult for meself to tell. But, 'sposin' they did see me and knew me, and had me in their clutches at the same identical time; it's my candid opinion they'd give me a pine coffin, and a dozen bullets. The more shame to 'em and their king, and the whole posse of 'em, by the blessed St. Pathrick."

"Well, now look here 'Irish' — I call you that 'cause it sounds more sociable than Dennis — I owe you a life for a savin' mine at the rumpus of Brandywine. And now by the Lord above us, if the Britishers ever catch hold of you, and I don't rescue you, or if they harm you, and I don't avenge you, then may I never know what it is to die a soldier's death, but die the pitiful death of a spy! That's swor' to, Irish —" continued the good-hearted soldier as he grasped the Irishman's hand and gave it a hearty shake. "And now let's be off; you know our Captain told us to pay a visit to his father's house, and recon'itre, and then bring him word, but I've a notion of puttin' an end to this marriage somehow or other, and to bringin' him word of that too, before he hears it is in progress."

"Sure, Harry Heft, ye didn't tell me of any marriage. Be jabers I'm all in the dark —"

"But come along. Let's ford the creek at the falls, here, and travel down toward the Paper Mill, and I'll tell you on the way!"

Fording the stream, they passed along the road on the eastern side of the Wissahikon for about a quarter of a mile, until the waters of the Paper Mill Run came plunging into its bosom, from a height covered with the buildings and out-houses surrounding a massive mill. Pursuing the course of the rivulet — which at this point takes a sudden bend to the west on its way to the Schuylkill — after fifteen minutes had elapsed, they arrived at a spot, where a perpendicular wall of rocks arises from the opposite and northern shore of the stream, clothed in every cleft and crevice with giant pines, some growing out from the rock in a horizontal direction, others slanting upward, others bending crosswise, and with every giant pine, however fantastical in form, flinging its branches out into the moonlight from the straight and steep ascent of the cliff.

"Do you see that barricade of rocks, Irish?"

"Be jabers, a nateral fortriss!"

"Upon the top of that mass of rocks, is concealed as pretty a mansion as ever your eye rested upon. That's Major Tracy's house, and we ascend to it by a winding road. We cross over the stream on these steppin' stones. The entrance to this road is concealed among the bushes yonder. It begins somewhere below this tremendous wall. I have it."

They entered the bushes, and presently were journeying along a road, worn by horses' feet, which wound round the precipice, affording an easy, though somewhat sudden ascent to the platform of earth at the summit. Presently they emerged from the shade of the pine trees, and stood upon the turf of a green lawn, fenced round the edge of the precipice with the interlacing trunks of the pines, forming a natural protection, against the dangers of the steep, with their branches entwined through each other, crossed and re-crossed, and woven

together, so thickly and densely, as to give an observer an idea, that what he beheld was the work of man's art, rather than a feat of nature.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

THE BRIDAL PARTY.

In the centre of the lawn arose the substantial stone mansion of Major Tracy. It was a building of some magnitude, overshadowed by a towering sycamore which rising in all the strength and grandeur of ages, threw its leaning trunk over the gabled roof, while its far reaching branches, bursting out on every side, clad with a thick and luxuriant foliage, afforded a pleasant and agreeable defence from the rigor of the sun in the heat of summer, and now, as the moon sank below the horizon, enveloped the edifice and the lawn in its vicinity in deepest shadows. The darkness was broken by long lines of light streaming from the half-closed shutters of the chamber looking out upon the portico which fronted the verdant grass, and extended along the entire front of the mansion.

"Now keep your eyes about you, Irish," exclaimed Harry, as he glanced hurriedly round at the spacious mansion and the range of out-buildings. "By the Continental Congress, if I aint very much mistaken, them lights, flashing from the windows, out upon the porch, have a tale of their own to tell. Let's recon'itre, Irish."

"Be St. Pathrick! what's that?" muttered Dennis in a tone of suppressed wonder, as they approached the porch. "Do you see any thing there, my darlint crittur?"

Harry Heft followed the finger of the Irishman with his eye, and discovered, fastened by their bridle reins to a pillar of the portico, two gallant steeds, whose trappings, the ornamented saddle cloth and the holsters, all showed that their riders were at least military men, if not officers of rank and authority.

With hushed breath and cautious step, Harry Heft stole along the floor toward the window shutters from whence emerged the light, and which reached from the roof of the portico to the floor. Each window served the purpose of a door, as well as a medium for the admittance of daylight. Gazing through the crevice of the shutters — the sashes opened after the fashion of folding doors, being thrown back — Harry Heft beheld a scene which he regarded with evident wonder and astonishment, although he had anticipated something of the kind.

The apartment within was spacious, large, and furnished after the fashion of some sixty years since. It was lighted by a chandelier, filled with stately candles of wax, and suspended from the stuccoed ceiling. In the centre of the apartment with his back turned to the window, stood a portly man, with a very red, round face, a very brilliant nose, and a very small mouth, and his ample figure arrayed in the gown and surplice of a clergyman, while his little fat hands, with short gouty fingers, grasped a gilt edged book, from which he was reading. It was the book of Common Prayer, and he read the marriage ceremony.

In front of him were the bridegroom and bride; on one side stood Major Tracy, with a settled frown on his brow: a spacious armchair on the opposite side contained the form of the invalid Squire Waltham, who gazed with a half vacant, half imbecile stare upon the company around. At his elbow stood a gentleman of some fifty winters, attired in the undress of a colonel in the British army, and with an impressive countenance, marked by the lines of care and thought. He was named Colonel Musgrave, and he held the baton of command over the fortieth regiment. The arrival of this gentleman had been somewhat late and hurried, for his boots were bespattered with mud, and his entire costume was marked by the unfinished and disarranged air that attends a journey undertaken and executed in haste. Opposite to this gentleman, and forming the right wing of the circle, was a young gentleman, attired as a cornet in the dragoon service of his Majesty's —— th regiment, and with a face and air expressive of nothing in especial, except a very apparent desire to play as critical a part in his capacity of right wing of the picture, as his disordered dress and soiled boots would possibly admit.

The bridegroom, arrayed in a lustrous coat of snow white silk, with small clothes and stockings to match, buckles of shining silver, and square toed shoes, seemed disposed to do particular justice to his situation as a prominent point of the picture. Halting on his

left leg, with the right advanced, he extended one delicate white hand, sparkling with rings, to the bride, displaying all the beauty and finish of the ruffle at his wrist in the action, while his other hand was disposed very gracefully, with the little finger deposited in a fold of his snow white and gaudily embroidered vest, as with his head erect, and his powdered hair flowing in graceful folds over his shoulder, Lieutenant Wellwood Tracy looked straight forward over the head of the clerical gentleman, and a complacent expression mantled over his face, which seemed to intimate that he considered himself a very fine point of the picture indeed, and worthy of the pencil of a Vandyke, or a Godfrey Kneller.

The whole scene was a mockery of a solemn sacrifice, but the victim destined to be offered up at the altar, appeared in all the splendor of her queenly beauty even at that dread hour, when the utterance of a few simple words, and the transposition of a ring, would place her destiny in the hands of one, for whom she cared little, and of whom she knew less, and sever her fate from the silken cord that entwined it with the destiny of him whom she loved with all the purity and self devotion of a maiden passion.

The golden hair, unconfined by band or cincture, fell in a shower of waving tresses over her robes of white, down to her very waist; while with head drooped low, and eyes downcast, the maiden, scarce knowing what she did, tendered her hand — cold as the marble of a statue — to her gallant bridegroom, and muttered the responses of the ceremony with a vacant manner and absent air, as though her mind wandered amid the shadowy creations of a dream.

Harry Heft beheld the scene at a glance, and as he gazed, he became instinctly aware of the relative positions of the parties.

He had scarce time to think of some means of delivering the fair maiden, when the marriage ceremony reached the point, near its accomplishment, where the last binding words are said, and the ring is placed upon the finger of the bride. At this moment Harry felt some one pressing against his shoulder, and a face touching his own, while his quick ear caught the sound of suppressed breathing. He turned his head aside, whispering — "Hist! Dennis!" when a hand, placed over his mouth, hushed the exclamation of sudden surprise that was bursting from his lips, and he beheld the face of Herbert Tracy gazing over his shoulder, with his lip compressed and his eye flashing, as he regarded the marriage scene within the apartment.

Every lineament of his countenance was impressed with an expression so strange, so dread, so unreal and fearful in its character, that the Ranger scarce might recognize the face of his Leader in that high forehead all seamed by deep wrinkles, and relieved by the hair, thrown wildly aside from the countenance; the full, black eye, glaring from beneath the eyebrows; the lips compressed as fixedly and firmly as those of a chiselled statue; and the lines of each cheek so clearly marked with the settled appearance that betokens powerful yet suppressed emotion, and the entire visage, with every outline, shown in the boldest relief by the glaring light which streamed from the chandelier within the apartment, seemed so much changed and altered, that Harry Heft only knew his captain from the simple reason, that it were impossible to forget one lineament of the face and features that he had known and looked upon from earliest childhood.

Harry felt his hand grasped by that of his leader, with a quick, hurried, but expressive movement—

"As God lives, stand by me!" whispered the captain.

"As God lives, I will, to the death!" returned the soldier, in as deep a whisper.

"With this ring thee I wed"—exclaimed the bridegroom within the apartment, as, bending aside with a most graceful bow, he took the fair hand of Marian in his own, and with a delicate movement of the thumb and forefinger of his right hand, proceeded to place the marriage ring on the ivory finger of the maiden. The gold had touched the finger of Marian, and every eye was fixed upon the twain; Major Tracy smiled grimly, as he viewed the accomplishment of his scheme; the invalid father looked up into the face of his daughter; the eyes of the clerical gentleman wandered from his book; and even the face of the colonel, as well as the cornet, betrayed some interest in the matter; the ring, I say, had touched but not encircled the finger

when a rushing sound was heard, a hurried footstep, and the tall form of Herbert Tracy stood between the bridegroom and bride, the ring was dashed on the floor, and Wellwood Tracy was hurled aside by a blow from the scabbard of the captain's sword.

"She is mine! Mine before God and Heaven!" exclaimed Herbert, as Marian fell in his arms, with a shriek and a glance of wild rapture, that told of recognition. "Mine before God and Heaven! This for the man that shall say me nay!"

Unsheathing his sword with his good right hand, he gathered the fainting maiden to his bosom with his other hand, and glanced around upon the bridal party, like a noble stag at bay, as he retired one step toward the window.

Had some sudden and fearful spell fallen upon the stern Major Tracy, the invalid Waltham, the round-faced parson, the sedate colonel, the smooth-faced cornet, or the silken bridegroom, they could not, each and all of them, have formed more finished and perfect statues of surprise than they did for a single instant after Herbert had burst into the room. Had a column of fire shot upward from the floor; had a thunderbolt severed the ceiling, and scattered its rays of death at their feet; had the mansion been rocked by the heavings of an earthquake—the bridal party, it is very probable, would have been somewhat surprised, if not thunderstricken; but here was a column of fire, thunderbolt, and earthquake, all combined in one form, and that form the figure of the gallant Ranger. I trow the bridal party were more than surprised.

Herbert Tracy took advantage of this first instant of speechless astonishment, and pressing his betrothed closer to his bosom, strode with a hurried yet even step toward the window—"Mine she is before God and Heaven!" he cried—"mine by all that is good and hallowed! Mine by her plighted troth—mine by her vows of love!" he continued, reaching the window, and extending his sword, while, with with a bitter sneer on his lip, he glanced around the room—"And think ye I will surrender my claim to any man that lives? Curses may be heaped upon my head by him whom I am bound to name my father, and death and ruin may stand in my path, but still—by the Lord that lives—Herbert Tracy will not show himself unworthy of his name! A merry even to you, gentlefolks!"

Emerging from the window, he rushed across the porch, and stood beside the steeds that had so lately borne the colonel and the cornet to the bridal party, but which were now held ready for mounting, by Dennis at one bridle rein, and Harry at the other.

"Mount, capt'in, mount"—cried Harry—"They're comin'—they're comin'! Mount, and away down the Paper Mill Run road! Push for the Quaker's farm house! Mount, by the Continental Congress, mount!"

Ere Harry had finished his favorite expletive, Herbert had sprang upon the stoutest of the steeds, and with the fainting Marian in his arms, struck for the road that led around the rock down to the Wissahikon.

"Now's your time, Dennis? If you've any sperrit in your lazy bones, mount that horse by the stable yonder—I'll mount this! Hurray, boy, for your neck's in danger! Now, then—" cried the gallant trooper, as he sprang upon the cornet's horse, and enveloped his form in the blanket that hung at the saddle bow—"now then, 'Irish,' strike for Rittenhouse's Mill, right across the fields—they'll mistake the fluttering of this blanket for the young lady's dress. Take the fields for it, and lead 'em on a wrong scent. By the Continental Congress—"

"Yes, be jabers!" shouted Dennis. "Will it plase your leddyshep to ride the laste bit closer to me! Och, darlin'! Whoop!"

And off they went, like mad devils as they were, the sound of their horses' hoofs echoing far around, and the white blanket of Harry Heft fluttering in the moonlight, like the robe of an uneasy spirit, amusing itself with a midnight ride.

The sounds of the horses' hoofs roused the astonished bridal party from the spell of surprise, and with one assent, they rushed out on the portico, leaving the invalid in his arm-chair.

"Call the servants"—shouted the Colonel—"Wilson, I say—where's that lazy trooper!"

"There he goes!" muttered the enraged Lieutenant Tracy with an oath, as he ran from one end of the porch to the other; "there he goes down the Wissahikon—by the G—s!"

"I ra-ythor think the've taken a cut across the fe-eld, Lev'tenant," lisped the cornet smiling at the idea of telling the whole story at the mess table. "There they go! *How* her dwess *does* flatt*aw*," he continued, as the white blanket met his eye.

Without a word, without an exclamation of surprise, did Major Tracy assemble the domestics, and rouse the trooper, who was sleeping on a wheelbarrow near the stable door, under the influence of plentiful potations.

A short and hurried council was held; men were despatched to the stables at a hundred yards distance, to saddle other horses; some started on foot in pursuit of the fugitives; but amid all their conversation, their imprecations, and their vows of vengeance, the ears of the bridal party were saluted with the sound of the retreating hoofs, echoing from the grounds north of the mansion, to the road on the east, and from the road, through the woods to the grounds again.

Full ten minutes elapsed ere horses could be saddled for the major, the colonel, the cornet, and the lieutenant; and the oaths and imprecations of the three latter did not by any means tend to increase the speed of the domestics in their employment.

"Scour the country in every direction!" shouted the colonel, as he beheld his companions mounted, together with the half sober trooper and three of the domestics. "The fugitives cannot pass the British lines without alarming the picquets! This side of the lines they're in our power! Cornet, you will join me, with that drunken lout yonder, in pursuing the rebel captain across the field. Major, perhaps it would be best for you and the lieutenant to take the Wissahikon road. We can traverse the country in different directions, and meet at Rittenhouse's mill."

Major Tracy nodded assent.

"Look ye, sirs," he exclaimed to the three stout fellows, who, with pistols in their hands, were mounted on strong fleet horses by his side. "Look ye, sirs — should ye come across the fugitives, be careful that you do not harm the lady in white, Miss Waltham. You are all good marksmen — I'll make the man of you comfortable for life who shall pick the rebel officer in black from his horse! Mark ye — he is a traitor, and deserves no quarter! Away!"

And as they galloped away in various directions, one of the frightened domestics, a weak and aged woman, entered the scene of the late bridal ceremony, and beheld the clerical gentleman, on his knees before Mr. Waltham, who was still seated in his arm-chair, with his head fallen to one side, his eyes closed, and his lips parted. The clergyman was engaged in chafing the hands of the invalid, aud the servant drew nearer, and looked over his shoulder into the face of the sick man, and started back with a cry of horror, as she discovered the ghastly paleness of his cheeks, the blue livid circles around his eyes, and the sunken eye-sockets. His spirit had gone from the scenes of marrying and giving in marriage, from the scenes of man's passions, and man's wrong to his fellow, from his daughter, his lands and his gold, up to that Tribunal that knows no earthly passion or prejudice, there — in the solemn words of the Sacred Book — "To give account of the deeds done in the body."

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

THE PURSUIT.

When Herbert Tracy flung himself upon the steed of the British Colonel, and planting his spurs into the sides of the plunging animal, forced him to take the steep and winding road that led around the precipice, a thousand feelings rushed through his mind, and a wild tumult of oppressing thoughts agitated his brain, but amid all the contending feelings and oppressing thoughts, one idea was uppermost in his mind — a steady, firm and unalterable resolve to bear his betrothed away to some scene of safety, and a desperate purpose to part with his life ere the beautiful being, whose head now lay pillowed on his breast, should be torn from his embrace, by the rude hands of those who had, so mockingly, toyed with her plighted vows.

Winding his arm yet closer around the waist of Marian, he dashed down the narrow path, plunged into the Wissahikon, and ascending the opposite bank, gained the rocky road, which pursued its irregular course along the banks of the stream. As he flew along the

road with the speed of wind, the fresh and breezy night air, fanning the pallid cheek of the maiden, awoke her to consciousness, and Herbert felt the warm beating of her heart, throbbing against the hand which held her to his side.

She opened her beaming blue eyes, and as the warm flush of youth and love again glowed on her swelling cheek, she cast a hurried glance around, as though she essayed to recall her wandering thoughts, and then while the whole truth flashed upon her, she wound her arms with a quick, convulsive movement, around the neck of her lover, her bosom rose and fell in the moonlight, and sinking her head upon his manly breast, she found relief from the tumult of opposing thoughts, in a flood of tears.

Herbert gazed upon her fair face with its beauty half upturned to the sky, and if ever, during his wild and dreamy life, he felt his soul swell with the feeling of intense happiness, and every nerve thrill with delight, it was at that moment, when her full and lustrous orbs were cast upward, with a glance so full of high and hallowed love, so full of all the trustfulness of woman's passion, and beaming with that winning confidence, unmodified by mistrust or doubt, which the vilest of mankind would hesitate to wrong or betray.

The sounds of pursuit broke upon the air. Herbert had attained the point where the Paper Mills cast a lengthened shadow over the stream, and a quarter of a mile of forest road lay between him and Rittenhouse's Mill. It was his purpose to avoid his pursuers, to seek the farm house of the Quaker, Joab Smiley, place his betrothed in safety till the morrow, then repass the British lines by the bed of the Wissahikon, and reach the Haunted House by midnight. Marian—thought Herbert— could remain concealed in the farm house, with entire safety, until the coming day, when the fate of battle might enable him to place her in a situation of greater security.

The sounds of pursuit, the echoing of the horses' hoofs and the shouts of the pursuers, broke louder and nearer upon the stillness of the night, and sinking the rowels into the flanks of his steed, Herbert gave him free rein, and in an instant the noble barb dashed along the road, while the monotonous beat of his hoofs upon the sod, betokened the utmost stretch of his speed put to the test.

A hundred yards lay between Herbert and Rittenhouse's Mill, and a hundred yards behind his pursuers came thundering along the road. The report of a pistol broke upon the air, and a bullet whistled by Herbert's ear at the same moment that the voice of his father, urging the pursuit, rose high above all other sounds.

"On—on—let him not escape with life! Let your aim be sure, and the bullet certain of its mark! Onward, my brave men, onward!"

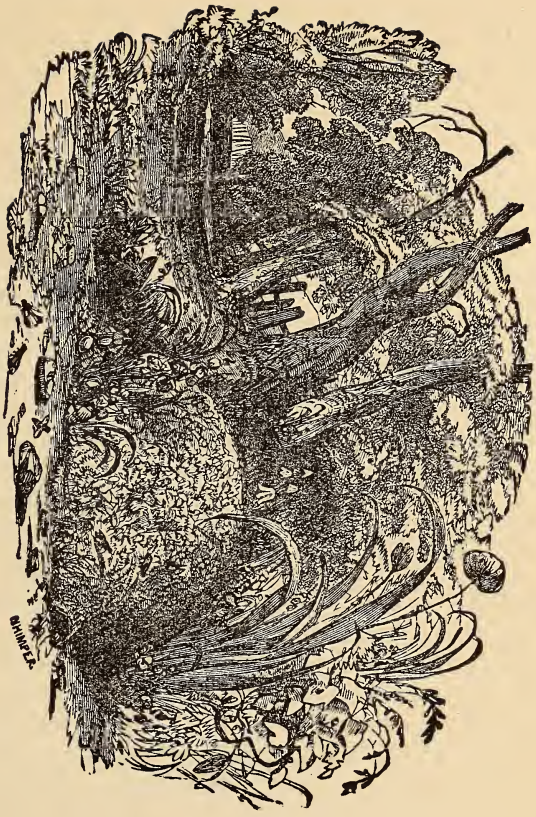
"I will foil them yet!" Herbert muttered between his teeth, as he recognized the tones of his father's voice. "Here is Rittenhouse's Mill—the moon has gone down, and the night is dark—now God help me!"

As the exclamation rose upon his lips, the sound of horses' hoofs which rose in his rear, were echoed by similar sounds on the opposite bank of the stream, and the crashing of brushwood and the rustling of branches, gave Herbert warning that his escape was cut off beyond the Mill.

The crisis came. The Mill was reached, the party on the opposite side came thundering through the woods, and the voice of Major Tracy was heard, nearer and yet more near; when, reining his steed up against a small and perpendicular rock which peeped out from among a mass of brushwood, Herbert loosened his feet from the stirrups, and gathering his arm around the waist of Marian, with a firmer embrace, sprang from the horse, upon the rock, amid the shelter of the environing shrubbery.

As he sprang, the affrighted horse bounded forward, dashed through the stream, swept up the road that traversed the opposite hill, and with the speed of a bolt, driven from the bow, disappeared in the shade of the wood.

As he disappeared, the party of Colonel Musgrave emerged from the woods on the opposite bank of the stream. Almost at the very same instant Major Tracy with his men, rushed along with the speed of lightning, within an arm's reach of the spot upon which Herbert stood, and passing between the rock and the Mill, dashed into the Wissahikon, and ere he was aware he confronted the colonel and his company in mid-stream.



SCENE IN THE WILDERNESS.

"Which way went the fugitives?" shouted Col. Musgrave.

"Do you not hear the horses' hoofs upon the hill!" replied the stern and commanding voice of Major Tracy — "away! away! We trifle — we lose time! away!"

"We'll have them now, by ——" exclaimed the voice of Lieutenant Wellwood. "They cannot be more than fifty yards ahead! Now for 't my men!"

And with one assent the pursuers joined their forces, and galloping up the opposite bank of the stream, in the direction taken by the steed which Herbert had just abandoned, their forms were lost in the shades of the forest, and the echoing of their horses' hoofs began to grew fainter on the air.

Herbert had well calculated his address and dexterity, combined with an intimate acquaintance with the spot, when he took the sudden leap from the saddle on to the rock, among the surrounding brushwood. In his youthful ramblings near the Mill, he had discovered a path, perhaps worn by the feet of Indians, an age before, winding along the nooks, the heights and recesses of the hills forming the eastern bank of the stream. The entrance to this path, within a few feet of the Mill, was hidden by the branches of the trees mingling with the light shrubbery, that grew upon the perpendicular rocks, separating the road from the forest. In the moment of peril, the memory of the rock and the secret path flashed upon his mind, and in an instant, he availed himself of the remembrance, and eluded pursuit in the very crisis of the chase.

As the sounds of the pursuing party came softened and almost hushed by distance to the ears of the lovers, Herbert gave Marian the support of his arm, and they threaded their way along the winding path through the woods, until they emerged upon the meadow sloping from farmer Smiley's house down to the Wissahikon. Approaching the farm house, they found they had been preceded by Harry Heft and his friend Dennis, who it seems had succeeded in persuading the Quaker to receive the betrothed of Herbert, under the shelter of his roof, for a few days until the fortune of war might enable the lovers to unite their fates beyond danger of separation. After he had seen Marian safe under the peaceful roof, and attended by the care of the young Quakeress, Herbert departed from the farm house, with a promise to return at the earliest moment that might afford an opportunity. Dennis and Harry proceeded to take their way to the Wissahikon on their return to the American lines, in another direction from that taken by Herbert, who paused an instant on the bank of the stream, ere he plunged into the recesses of the woods.

As he looksd back upon the quiet home of the Quaker farmer sleeping in the starlight, a fearful presentiment crossed his mind, that he should never gaze upon his betrothed again — that some dire calamity was hovering over their path — that some overwhelming evil, was even now gathering blackness upon the horizon of their sky, about to burst upon their heads, and crush every fair prospect of their lives under its leaden pall.

"Come what will" — said Herbert, "come what will, my resolve is taken. My hand and sword shall be raised, first in defence of the hills and vales of this fair land of my birth; and then in defence of the maiden, bound to me by the solemn vows of our blighted troth. Death may come, and ruin may threaten — but their approach shall be met with *honor*."

CHAPTER NINTH.

THE COUNCIL.

The hills and vales of the Wissahikon slept in the silence of midnight, when a solitary horseman issued from the mass of forest trees, near the Haunted House, and taking his way across an intervening field, presently reined in his steed along the front of the mansion.

It was a small, one storied building, marked by a style of architecture which mingled the steep, gable-ended roof of a cottage, with the high and pointed windows of the Gothic order; while the eves of the mansion were heavy with carved work, the window frames were decorated with quaint devices in wood; the numerous chimneys by which it was surmounted seemed as much contrived for ornament as use and the general air and appearance of the place, indicated that it might have been the abode of some wealthy admirer of the country, who had here fixed himself a home amid the solitude and shade of the woods.

It was situated on a gentle eminence approached by steps of stone, built in the grassy bank, and the limited lawn which sloped from three sides of the picturesque edifice, was terminated by a pleasant grove of horse-chestnut trees, giving an air of seclusion to the spot, while the ground in the rear was occupied by a garden, once agreeably diversified with flowers, but now overgrown and choked by weeds.

The edifice had, in fact, been the summer abode of a wealthy English merchant of Philadelphia, who was scared from its precincts by the noise and confusion of war.

Deserted by its proprietor, the mansion had fallen into partial decay, and was alternately occupied by marauding parties of the American and British armies, who not unfrequently awoke the echoes of its quiet walls, with sounds of mirth and revelry, which, perchance was the occasion of its name — the Haunted House — the songs and yells of the drunken troopers being mistaken by the surrounding farmers for the cries and shrieks of spirits of the unreal world.

As the horseman halted in front of the Haunted House, a figure, attired in the uniform of the Black Rangers, advanced from the shade of the horse-chestnut trees, exclaiming—

"Well, Capt'in, is that you? Dennis and Leftenant Heft has just come in—I was afeared something mought a-happened to you."

"Aye, Sergeant, I am back again without harm or injury. But tell me—has the commander-in-chief arrived? If my eyes do not deceive me, those dusky masses, scattered across the fields yonder, are the American troops, and the glimmer of their arms in the starlight shows that they are ready for action at a moment's warning."

"Gineral Washington has arrived"—replied the Sergeant—"and the Black Rangers are honored with the post of 'Guard around the Haunted House.' But with regard to the information, gathered to-night by the Rangers ——"

Having been put in possession of this information, Herbert sprang from his horse, and was admitted by a sentinel into a front chamber of the mansion, where a glaring light, burning upon a large oaken table, discovered the figures of a number of officers, of various ranks and grades, attired in the blue and buff uniform of the Continental service.

"It will be advisable to begin the attack before sunrise to-morrow morning," exclaimed the officer who sat at the head of the table, as Captain Tracy entered. "This is the plan of the battle agreed upon," he continued, laying his hand upon an unrolled chart which was spread open upon the table—"the divisions of General Sullivan and Wayne, flanked by the Brigade of General Conway, will enter the village of Germantown, and commence the attack, with the light infantry of the enemy who are posted at Allen's House, at some three miles distance from this place. Ah! Captain Tracy, I am glad to welcome you back; how have you succeeded in your mission?"

Herbert proceeded as briefly as possible to relate to the Commanner-in-Chief, the various facts in his possession relative to the force, numbers, and position of the enemy.

"The British line of encampment crosses the village of Germantown at right angles," said Herbert, "near the centre. The left wing extends from the main road, across the irregular and enclosed grounds of the various farmers, over the Wissahikon along to the river Schuylkill. It is covered in front, by mounted and dismounted chasseurs, and the right which extends eastward toward the Delaware, is defended in front by the Queen's American Rangers and a battalion of light infantry. The 40th regiment, under the command of Lieutenant Col. Musgrave, is posted nearly a mile in advance of the main line, between Chew's House and Chestnut Hill, and a battalion of light infantry occupies the summit of the hill, three miles in advance of this spot."

"Your information, Captain Tracy," said the Commander-in-Chief, "agrees, in every essential point, with the data already in my possession. So, gentlemen, our original plan of battle holds good. While the divisions of Generals Wayne and Sullivan enter the village by way of Chestnut Hill, the divisions of Greene and Stephens, flanked by McDougall's brigade, will take a circuit along the Limekiln Road, some two miles eastward from Chew's House, and attack the enemy's right wing. The Militia of Maryland and New Jersey, under command of Generals Smallwood and Forman and march down the Old York

Road, which lies three miles to the east of the Limekiln Road, and engage with the rear of the right. General Armstrong's Pennsylvania brigade will attack the enemy's left at Vanduring's Mill, at the junction of the Wissahikon with the Schuylkill. Think you, Captain Tracy, that we shall be able to surprise the enemy?"

"I think the movement might be effected, with care and celerity, your Excellency."

A shade of thought came over the noble brow of the Commander-in-Chief, and he leaned his head musingly upon his hand for an instant.

"Gentlemen," he exclaimed, after the pause of a moment, "I need not tell you that every thing depends upon the suddenness and secresy of our movements. If we surprise the enemy, we shall terminate this disastrous war, and win the best of all boons, our country's Independence; if the enemy are on the alert, and ready to receive us, it is more than probable that the superior discipline of his troops will triumph over the irregular bravery and undisciplined courage of a great portion of the army which I have the honor to command. What think ye, gentlemen?"

And as each hardy veteran or brave aspirant gave his opinion, the scene assumed an appearance of interest, which indicated the fixed determination of the American commanders, never to lay down the swords they so gallantly unsheathed, until the independence of their common country was achieved.

The glaring light of the lamps, placed in the centre of the oaken table, cast a ruddy glow upon the faces and forms that clustered round the Commander-in-chief

His face so calm, so mild, and yet so full of that native dignity of expression, which tells of a mind formed to rule, was shown in the boldest light and strongest shade, as he turned from one brave man to another, to receive their opinions and suggestions on the coming contest.

There was the towering form, and bold and open countenance of Wayne, whose sword-thrust never failed, and whose charge mowed the enemy's ranks, like the scathings of an earth-riven thunderbolt; there was the gallant Knox, with his bluff, honest visage, every line beaming good humor, and dignified by an expression of determined courage; there was the sagacious Greene, whose councils were as full of wisdom as his sword was sure, and his mind clear and self-possessed in the hour of mortal conflict; and there gathered around the man upon whose shoulders heaven had placed the destiny of his country, were the brave men, who flocking from every hill and vale of the continent, from foreign lands, from the misrule of despotism in every part of oppressed Europe, from the hearth sides of their infancy, and the homes of their manhood, and thronged in one gallant band around the banner of freedom — there they stood with their good swords that had tasted blood in many a battle girded to their sides, with their noble visages marked by scars, and darkened by the toil and exposure of battle, and with hearts as true and bold as ever beat in the bosom of the most chivalric knight and daring warrior of the age of gallant deeds and generous warfare.

And standing by the side of Washington, was a young soldier, whose form was moulded with all the symmetry of manly beauty, whose cheek was yet warm with the bloom of early youth, and whose piercing eye and high forehead, with its bold outline, indicative of the highest order of mind, gave rich promise of the mature man, whose words of burning eloquence, were, in future years, to fall on the ears of his countrymen, like the revelations of a seer.

Washington, ever and anon, would incline his head to Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton, and listen to the suggestions he offered, with an interest of which older men might have been proud, or invite his opinion with an eagerness that showed how strong a hold the young soldier had attained in the heart of his commander. Little did the father of his country think of the future fate of the aspiring soldier! Little did he imagine that the youthful form by his side, would survive the perils of war, to die after the quietude of peace had succeeded to the strife of battle, in an inglorious combat, the fruit of a participation in the seenes of political conflict.

The council lasted until an hour after midnight, when the plan of operations for the succeeding day being resolved upon, the various officers retired to their different commands, to snatch such hasty repose as the lateness of the hour might allow, and to make such arrange-

ments for the coming conflict as might tend to ensure success to the American arms.

And under the broad canopy of heaven, unsheltered from the dews and damps of the night air by covering or tent, slept the brave soldiers of the American host, as soundly, as securely, as though the coming morn was to bring scenes of peace and quietness, instead of turmoil and bloodshed of battle.

As Herbert Tracy stood gazing upon the scene around, from the elevation of the Haunted House; as his eye wandered from the vast dome of the heavens above, hung with a million stars, to the landscape, with its hills covered with forests, its cultivated valleys, and its level fields, along which were scattered the masses of the Continental army, the thought of the coming contest, and of the fearful effects it might produce, flashed like a meteor-light across his mind.

"How many a brave heart that now beats warmly, will to-morrow night be cold and torpid under the touch of death! Many a noble form will measure out the hasty grave of the battle field — many an eye will be dimmed — many a hand stiffened, and many an arm unnerved — but come success or come defeat, for me will remain the same forbidding destiny, over my head will lower the same dark cloud, heavy with the lightnings of a father's curse!"

CHAPTER TENTH.

THE BATTLE MORN.

The morning of Saturday, the 4th of October, 1777, dawned slowly and heavily.

The sky was obscured by dimly defined masses of clouds and mist, which overhung the pathway of the sun, and extended, like one vast shroud, along the dome of heaven, enveloping hill, and plain, and stream, in the density of their folds.

Objects were not discernible at more than fifty paces, and, not unfrequently, the weary eye of the soldier essayed in vain to define the outline of marching troops, opposing enclosures, brushwood or trees, not more than twenty paces in front of his path.

As the first glimmering of dawn began to steal over the landscape, the American army resumed their march, unmarked by the roll of drum or the peal of trumpet.

The only sound that disturbed the silence of the atmosphere was the monotonous tread of men and horses, shaking the earth, like the low moaning of far off thunder. Ever and anon the words of command, uttered in a suppressed tone, passed along the line. These sounds, mingled with the jar of clanking swords, the shrill neigh of the mettled war-horse, and the thousand half subdued noises that accompany the movements of a large body of armed men, were all the tokens that served to warn the surrounding farmers and peasantry to flee from the scene of the approaching conflict.

At the head of the central body, with Wayne on one side and Sullivan on the other, rode the Man of the Army, his tall form seeming yet more lofty, as it loomed through the mist, and his face impressed with an expression of solemn determination, as he gave to his various aids-de-camp the orders of the day, the directions regulating the march, or as he imparted farther instructions in relation to the attack and surprise.

The deep and prolonged murmur and half-suppressed bustle, that was heard to the right and left of the central body, served to show that the divisions of Greene and Stephen on the left wing, and the militia of Maryland and Jersey on the extreme left, as well as the brigade of Pennsylvania on the extreme right, were defiling east and west, to take their respective positions in the approaching struggle.

As the central division advanced in regular order over the fields, and through the woods, that lay between the Haunted House and Chestnut Hill, the fog seemed to deepen, and the light of day served only to render the gloom more apparent, and objects around, more vague and shadowy.

The Black Rangers were some two hundred yards in advance, and a quarter of a mile to the right of the main body, on the look out for the advanced parties of the enemy. They had arrived within a mile of Chestnut Hill, and were ascending a circular elevation, crowned with a thick copse, when the quick ear of Harry Heft first discerned the sounds of laughter, the clank of swords, and the pattering of horses' hoofs, on the opposite side of the hill, beyond the woods.

"With your permission, Captain, I'll jist ride up to the top 'o the hill and see what them suspicious sounds might mean.'

"Do so, Lieutenant," replied Herbert. "It strikes me that your eye will discover some stray foraging party who have lost their way in the fog. Just approach near enough to ascertain their force and position — don't thrust yourself heedlessly into danger."

"And sure, Capt'in," exclaimed Dennis, "might n't it be jest as well for meself to ride to the opposite side of the hill, in a different direction from that taken by the Leftenant, and take a dacent peep at the Britishers — if Britishers they be?"

The Captain nodded assent, and while the party halted, at some fifty paces from the copse at the summit of the elevation, Harry Heft put spurs to his horse, and galloped around the eastern side of the ascent, while Dennis pursued his way toward the western side.

Harry passed through the copse, and gained the opposite brow of the hill, where, reining in his steed, he tried to discover the nature of the ground. Below him, for some twenty paces, the hill sloped down in a gentle descent, and was then lost in the obscurity of the fog, from the bosom of which, far down in the valley, came drunken shouts, mingling with snatches of songs, and the sound of horses' hoofs.

"Let's see," soliloquized Harry, "where am I, and what's this place like? Ah! now I have it — this hill slopes down into a small valley, which it encircles in the shape of a new moon — and now that I think of it, there is a level outlet from it toward the south, opening into a flat bottomed piece of swampy ground.

On all other sides it is circumvented by a semi-circular woods, and it strikes me, them strangers, whoever they be, must be takin' a frolic right in the lap of the hollow. By the Continental Congress, what's that?"

The sound that attracted Harry's attention, was the quick and sudden noise of horses' hoofs, mingled with vindictive shouts, as though their riders were in close pursuit of an enemy. Nearer and nearer the sounds of pursuit drew, and Harry was about to obey the impulse of the moment and rush down into the valley, when the jarring report of a pistol broke upon the air, and the concussion lifted the fog for some fifty paces below the spot where stood the gallant Ranger.

As the mist slowly rose, like the upraising of a vast curtain, Harry beheld a sight that sent the blood, in one wild, warm current, to his heart.

Quick as the lightning flash he beheld two soldiers in the crimson uniform of British troopers, mounted on stout, fleet horses, galloping up the hill at the top of their speed, their swords suspended in the air, and their arms nerved to strike a wounded man, who drooping to one side of his steed, essayed to escape, while his noble horse made almost supernatural efforts to bear his rider from the scene of danger.

At the same instant that Harry saw the wounded man and his pursuers, he beheld a body of some dozen dragoons galloping in the rear; while down the hill, in the centre of the valley, the main force of the company (some twenty troopers in all) were gathered around a fire, in the act of springing upon their horses, as if disturbed by some unexpected alarm.

Scarce had Lieutenant Heft time to gather these particulars at a hurried glance, and ere he could draw a bridle rein, or give his horse the spur, he discovered that the wounded man was none other than his companion Dennis, and at the same moment his cry for quarter broke upon the air; but the uplifted swords of the dragoons descended, winged with all the force of their muscular arms, and the body of the American Ranger was hurled to the earth, while the riderless horse dashed by Harry Heft with his neck arched, his eyes distended, his mane flying, and the saddle on his back smoking with his master's blood.

Raising his rifle to his eye, with his blood boiling at the thought of the merciless carnage which had taken place under his very eyes — Harry Heft brought the barrel to bear upon the foremost of the troopers, and, in a flash, a lifeless body fell from the war horse, and the green sod bore upon its bosom the murderer and the murdered — the dragoon in his scarlet attire and gay trappings, and the free hearted Irishman in his uniform of black, changed to a ghastly purple by the blood that poured in gushing torrents from his heart.

The sharp crack of Harry's rifle had not ceased to ring upon the air, when the war shout of the Black Rangers swelled through the woods, and in an instant, dashing through the copse, as one man, the brave "twenty-four," with Herbert at their head, followed Harry

down the hill at the top of their horses' speed, every man with his short, straight sword raised in the air, adding vigor and volume to the yell of vengeance which arose from the band, as every eye beheld the bleeding form of Dennis the Irishman.

Down the hill they came, their gallant steeds moving with one impulse, as though they were but limbs of the same vast animal. At the sight, the twelve British Dragoons halted half way up the hill, in the full sweep of their career, and with horses recoiling on their haunches, seemed scarce to know whether to face the advancing avalanche, or to fly before its approach.

Not an instant had they for reflection, for the Black Rangers came on toward them with the speed of a thunderbolt and the voice of Harry Heft was heard above all other sounds—

"Rangers — Dennis cried for quarter, and they murdered him! Shall we give them quarter?"

"No quarter," shouted Herbert Tracy, raising himself in his stirrups and measuring the distance between his men and the twelve dragoons, with a glance of his eye, "no quarter! The bullet and the sword for the caitiffs. Over them, Rangers, over them!"

"No quarter!" echoed the Rangers, "no quarter!"

"Dennis Mc Dermott!" shouted Harry.

"The trumpeter boy!" replied Sergeant Brown. "Over them! Down with the caitiffs!" re-echoed the Rangers, with one voice, "no quarter!"

And in one compact body, of four abreast, with their steeds presenting a firm and unwavering front, the Black Rangers passed like a whirlwind over the shrinking forms and recoiling horses of the twelve dragoons.

And as the Nighthawks swept on, with their front unbroken and their ranks undisturbed, the British soldiers rolled on the earth, some crushed beneath the weight of their horses, others with their arms and legs broken — and others pouring forth their lives on the sod, from the mortal gash inflicted by the short swords of the Rangers, in the very crisis of their charge. All of them, man and steed, were scattered upon the earth, an indiscriminate mass of crushed bodies, of mangled horses and dying men.

As the Rangers passed on in their career of death, down the hill and toward the centre of the valley, the main body of the British dragoons formed in solid phalanx in the level of the vale, presenting a front of four abreast, with a wood on either side of their position, and the passage of the glen visible in their rear.

The fog had been raised from the bed of the valley, by the action of the large fire which the dragoons had kindled, and the light wreaths of mist curled gracefully among the tree-tops and around the hills, leaving the small level plain perfectly clear from all obscurity, and free from all exhalations.

CHAPTER ELEVENTH.

THE CHARGE.

The British Dragoons awaited the approach of the Rangers with sword drawn, and steeds firmly planted against each other, in a solid parallelogram, and with the determination to avenge their comrades, whom they could not save, visible in each countenance, in the flashing eye, the curling lip, and scowling brow.

The Americans came thundering on, and twenty paces lay between them and their foes.

Another moment and they would join in deadly contest, swords would flash, and bullets whistle, and their blood intermingle like streams of water.

At this moment, when every breath was hushed with intense expectation, the deep-whispered word of command came from the lips of Herbert Tracy, and with the celerity of thought, his men divided from one another, like drops of rain from the bustling cloud, and in an instant, the forms of twelve of their body were concealed in the wood to the right of the British soldiers, while the other twelve with Tracy at their head, sought the cover of the forest on the opposite side of the vale.

Each Ranger reined his steed up by the trunk of some giant tree, and lifting his rifle to his shoulder, brought its tube to bear upon the head of a particular dragoon, or in common parlance "picked his man;" and as the British soldiers turned to pursue their scattered foes, a stunning report broke from the woods on either side, and of the twenty-three rifle balls, nineteen proved faithful to the aim, and as

BATTLE OF LEXINGTON.

many steeds were without riders, while the ground was strewed with the British dead.

Herbert, too, had raised his rifle, and selected for his mark, the breast of the commander of the party, the barrel was levelled, his finger on the trigger, but at that instant the officer in issuing some hurried command to his men, turned his face toward Captain Tracy, and the arm of the Partizan Leader dropped nerveless by his side.

He beheld the face of Lieutenant Wellwood Tracy, and he could not kill him.

Lieutenant Wellwood Tracy, his antagonist in love, in honor, in the affections of his father; the man who made no scruple of usurping every right belonging to him by the decree of God and nature, was before him, in the line of his rifle, and yet he could not fire.

The British Lieutenant looked confusedly round the dead and the dying about him.

Ere he could attempt an escape, he was surrounded by the two divisions of the Rangers, uniting from either side of the vale, with the tall form of Herbert Arnheim Tracy towering in the midst.

"Dennis Mc Dermott!" shouted Harry Heft, whose blood was turned to gall, in his stern determination to avenge the Irishman — "Down with the Britisher! No quarter!"

"The trumpeter boy!" cried Sergeant Brown — "No quarter!"

"No quarter!" re-echoed the Rangers, and twenty-three swords were unsheathed over the head of Wellwood Tracy.

The British Lieutenant glanced hurriedly around, and seemed endeavoring to recover his self-possession, when Herbert Tracy threw his horse between the Rangers and the object of their anticipated vengeance.

"Rangers, I beg this man's life of ye?" he exclaimed — "He must not, *shall* not be slain! Lieutenant Tracy, you are my prisoner."

"So I perceive," observed the Lieutenant, with a ghastly attempt at humor. "But a moment since, you might have been indebted to these gentlemen for ridding you of the care of a prisoner, in the most expeditious, if not the most honorable way. You might, by —!"

"It is ill jesting with men whose swords are whetted for blood, by the sight of a murdered comrade," replied Herbert, placing himself at the head of his men, and galloping toward the spot, where Dennis McDermott had been murdered, "look to your prisoner Sergean Brown."

The Rangers arrived on the spot half way up the hill, where lay the dying Ranger — for life had not yet altogether departed from his manly frame.

He was terribly gashed; a deep sword wound laid open the scalp of his head, and his shoulder blade was broken, by a downward blow that had evidently been inflicted by no weak arm. A stream of blood flowed without intermission from a bullet wound near his heart and the crimson current had flooded the sod on which he lay, and was now trickling down the hill.

"Dennis, my boy," said Harry, kneeling beside the wounded man, "look up, Dennis, my boy! We paid the scoundrels for their treachery — we did! For every drop of your blood, a bucket-full of the British puddle has been spilt. Look up, Dennis, my boy!"

The dying man passed his hand over his eyes, and wiped away the blood, which streamed from his gashed forehead, and obscured his vision.

"Ye paid 'em did ye?" he exclaimed, faintly, as Harry supported his head.

"Aye, did we. Thirty of the red coats have bitten the dust."

"Thirty, did ye say? be jabers, Harry — ochone! The wife and the childer be the Lake — the Lake of Kill — Kill — Och! I'm kilt meself. Will ye not wipe the blood out o' my eyes, Harry Heft — I'd like to see — to see — sure the sun's going down, Harry Heft, and its getting dark — It's a lone world I'm going to, Harry Heft, and niver a priest to show me the way. Remimber me, Harry — masses for me sowl — Och! but it's dark!"

And with a rattling sound in the throat, like suffocation, the brave Ranger made a desperate struggle, as though he were wrestling with an invisible foe, and then, with a faint attempt to clear the blood away from his eyes, he sunk into the arms of Harry Heft, and ceased to live.

Large, burning tears streamed down the bluff Ranger's cheeks, as he gazed at the lifeless corse.

"If I don't make 'em pay for this," he muttered, and paused for a moment — and then

adde! in a lower tone — "it's no matter; that's all."

"Comrades!" exclaimed Sergeant Brown, "we'll have to shout two watchwords in the field to-day. 'This for the trumpeter boy' for ever shot we fire, and 'that for Dennis McDermott' for every sword cut we make."

A deep murmur of assent arose from the Rangers, who, with their Captain, gathered round the corse of the murdered man.

"I am really sorry," exclaimed Lieutenant Wellwood Tracy advancing, "that my drunken troopers, by such a barbarous act, should have provoked such a sanguinary massacre of my whole command — I am sorry, by —— !"

"Lieutenant Tracy," interrupted Herbert, "if you are willing to give me your parole of honor, not to bear arms against the American forces until you are properly exchanged, I will accept it, and you may depart at your own pleasure."

The Lieutenant seemed not very well pleased at this sudden interruption; however he gave his parole of honor, mounted his horse, and galloped toward the British lines.

Callous and cold-hearted as was Lieutenant Tracy, it was not without some feelings of emotion, that he looked back, from the passage of the vale, to the scene of the late skirmish, and marked in place of the lusty soldiers who had accompanied him thither, the mangled forms of the dying and the dead strown over the sod, which was crimsoned with their blood.

"Mount, Rangers, and away!" shouted Herbert. "Hark! They are in action at Chestnut Hill! Mount, and away!"

"Captain Tracy," exclaimed a voice from among the heap of wounded and dying, "for a cup of water, I can tell ye a tale that it might like ye to hear. Miss Waltham — "

"Miss Waltham? What of her?"

"The water first — the water — " murmured the wounded man.

The water was brought from a brooklet, that ran down the side of the hill, and having drained the canteen to the last drop, the trooper proceeded with his story.

He proved to be the drunken soldier who had come in contact with Harry at the Quaker's house, where he had been suffered to rest under the table until late at night. By some means or other, he became aware that Miss Waltham was in the farm house. Wandering along the fields, he fell in with his master, the Lieutenant, who was just returning to camp after the fruitless search for his bride. He presently became aware of Miss Waltham's hiding place, and with Col. Musgrave proceeded to the farm house — informed the young lady that they felt bound to escort her across the country, to the mansion of a friend, where the Colonel was quartered, and where she could remain, until the pleasure of her father might be known. Miss Waltham begged to be taken to her father's house, but that was impossible, the Colonel said; they were bound to hurry across the country and be with their commands by daybreak; and the only way left them to manifest their interest in her safety, and protect her from the violence of a rebel leader, (they affected to treat Herbert as an entire stranger) was to request her attendance, to the mansion of a common friend. Glad, at all events, to have escaped the hated marriage, Miss Waltham, yielded her consent, to what she could not well refuse, and accompanied the Colonel and Lieutenant to the mansion which they designated.

"Well, my wounded terror of turkies," exclaimed Harry, when the trooper had proceeded thus far, "had I known last night that you had been up to cuttin' sich deviltries, I'd put a stopper on you, mighty quick. I say, Captain, these red coats are swelling their account — it 'ill be full a'ter a while."

"Mount, Rangers, mount, and away!" shouted Herbert, who had mused deeply on the trooper's story — "we will have warm work to-day, by that firing yonder. Away, Nighthawks?"

CHAPTER TWELFTH.

THE ATTACK — THE CHASE — THE HAVOC.

"Look!" shouted Herbert Tracy, as he halted his steed for an instant on the brow of a hill, within pistol-shot of the Germantown Road, below Mount Airy. "Look ye, my Rangers, how the Loyalists flee! See how the Continentals sweep all before them — there's Mad Anthony — I'd swear to the stroke of his sword — and there's Pulaski — there's Washington in the very centre of the

melee. A blow for Washington, Rangers! Whoop and away!"

With an answering shout, the Rangers dashed down the hill, and swept across the plain, toward the Germantown Road.

While Herbert Tracy was engaged with the troop of Lieutenant Wellwood, a mile westward of Chestnut Hill, the central body of the American troops, under Wayne and Sullivan, with Washington at their head, had reached Mount Airy, surprised a battalion of light infantry, lodged in Allen's house in that vicinity, and by a bold and determined movement, drove the enemy before them at pleasure, following up the work with all the flush and heat of an unexpected triumph. Scattering their arms along the way, or ever and anon turning to face their pursuers, the remains of the battalion of light infantry proved the aptness of their name, and, in the course of fifteen minutes, fled precipitately down the Germantown Road, for the distance of three-quarters of a mile, until they reached the point where the 40th Regiment was stationed, under the command of Col. Musgrave.

Here the attack was renewed with all its vigor, and the American soldiers pressed forward as one man, and engaged with the British, muzzle to muzzle. Col. Musgrave was seen hurrying hither and thither along the lines, and the form of a tall, dark-browed man, in the dress of a private citizen, with a star of honor on his left breast, was ever at his shoulder, aiding him in his attempts to restore confidence to his men, and riding in the very thickest of the fight.

But it was in vain.

In vain did the British infantry plant their muskets in the sod, and, sinking on one knee, present to the advancing Americans a wall of bristling bayonets.

The charge of Wayne came thundering on, and his loud war-cry—"Upon them! over them!" rose above the din of battle. In vain did the British dragoons form in one solid front, and with upraised sword, sweep on to meet the American infantry. They were received mid-way by the fire of the backwoodsmen, each rifle marking its man; and each shot told as surely and effectually as though it was aimed at an inanimate rather than a living mark.

The confusion of the scene increased with each moment. Vast clouds of thick smoke began to roll in heavy folds over the field of contest, and from its bosom flashed the glare of musquetry, and the blaze of the rifle, while the clash of intermingling swords, the shouts of the combatants, the yells of the dying, the shrieks of the wounded, swelled upward to the Heaven, in one fearful chorus. A chorus more terrible to hear, than the roar of the earthquake bellowing through the caverns of the earth, or the yell of the storm, bursting in thunder claps around the summit of Chimborazo.

These sounds strike us with preternatural fear and awe, but the confusion of a battle-field not only thrills us with a feeling of indefinable awe, but awakens our sympathies almost to madness. In every shout, a man formed like ourselves bites the dust, in every groan the earth is crimsoned with the life current of the wounded, in every peal of musquetry a score of souls wing their way from all the flush of life and vigor of early manhood, up to that unseen and spiritual world which is invested with the brightest hopes and darkest terrors of the human mind.

At this crisis of the contest, Captain Tracy, at the head of his Rangers, came rushing on to join the tide of conflict. Every man with his head erect, his sword drawn, and his nighthawk plume fluttering in the wind swelled the shout of vengeance, they poured upon the British host. As each rifle winged its bullet, — as each sword sought its living sheath, the war cry of the Rangers rose high above all other sounds — "This for Dennis McDermott!" "This for the trumpeter boy!"

"It is in vain!" cried Colonel Musgrave to the gentleman in citizen's dress who stood at his side — "Major Tracy we must beat a retreat! The rebels fight like incarnate devils! Away — away to the main body — away toward Chew's house!"

As the order was passed along the British line, the Americans followed up the attack with increased zeal, and the scene became one of deadly chase and precipitate pursuit on the Continental side, and of hurried rout and confused retreat on the part of his Majesty's 40th regiment.

In utter confusion, and heedless of all system or regularity of march, the British soldiers

fled along the Germantown road, toward the main line, at the distance of three-quarters of a mile.

"Now, Wayne, now!" shouted Washington, as he rode in the van of the chase—"Follow up the blow and we have them!"

"See! how they fly!" exclaimed Herbert with an outburst of the wild excitement of the scene, "On Rangers, on! This for Dennis McDermott! Over them, Rangers, over them! This for the trumpeter boy!"

"This for Dennis McDermott!" shouted Harry Heft at each stroke.

"This for the trumpeter boy! This for Dennis McDermott!" re-echoed the Rangers, as they rode over the retreating enemy, and scattered panic and confusion among the British by their singular appearance, their uniform of sable, their short sword, which they used with a celerity and expedition that defied all the tactics of the European soldiers, and their rifle that uttered its volume of flame every instant, while their jet black horses swept on with the speed of wind.

Meanwhile, far on the American left, to the westward of Chew's house, Greene engages with the enemy's right, and the militia of Maryland and Jersey attack his rear, at the same time that the Pennsylvania troops pour down the Ridge Road, and throw their force upon the left of the British wing.

The sounds of battle disturbed the quiet shades of Wissahikon, and resounded over the fields, along the village, to the hills on the east. Every movement of the combatants tended to make Germantown the centre of the contest.

The fog which had been raised for a moment at sunrise, again descended upon the landscape, and involved the scene of strife in mist and darkness that gave additional horror to the fight. As the divisions of Wayne and Sullivan swept along the Germantown Road in the pursuit of the enemy's 40th regiment, the conflict, to the British left, began to deepen, and the smoke of battle rolled over the farm house of the Friend Joab Smiley, who stood gazing from a window upon the scene of strife and bloodshed.

Dame Smiley sat in one corner of the apartment with her face buried in her hands, to veil her eyes from the vivid flashes of the cannon, which like lightning ever and anon streamed through the windows.

Her daughter, the fair Marjorie, with her dark hair all dishevelled, and her hands clasped in silent prayer, buried her face in her mother's bosom, in a half-kneeling, half-reclining position, while her bosom heaved upward from its scanty covering, and sobs and sighs of undefinable terror convulsed her slender form.

Near the mother and daughter, with his large eyes fixed upon his massive, paw-like hands, which were laid upon his knees, sat the negro, "Charles the First," whose wanderings across the country, on his way to Major Tracy's mansion had been suddenly terminated by the conflict of the opposing armies. He had been forced to seek shelter in the farm house of the Quaker.

Apart from all the others, looking from the northern window of the apartment, stood the Quaker farmer, his muscular form raised to its full height, his head erect, and his stout arms folded upon his prominent chest, as he gazed sternly upon the scene of conflict.

The surrounding hills and woods were enveloped in the thick fog which enshrouded the entire face of the country, yet still the Quaker could perceive the forms of men mingling in deadly conflict, and the red glare of the cannon would for an instant lift the curtain of mist, and the scene of death was laid bare to his view.

"There—there—is the flag of the Continentals," he exclaimed—"Now it is down—there sails the cross—the blood red cross of the British men. Verily, it is terrible to see so much strife and bloodshed. Now the Americans march up the hill—there go their war horses—now they are driven back—Ha!—Verily!"

The Quaker drew a long breath, and stifled the exclamation that was about to issue from his lips.

"I am a strong man," muttered the farmer, "and I stand and look on while my neighbors are murdered. Verily, Hannah, I will even go forth to the field—I will go forth to the field, Hannah—Ha! Verily!"

"Surely, Joab"—exclaimed his wife, starting on her feet—"thee will not so far forget thee God, and thee brethren, as to mingle

the strife of battle? Joab — Joab — I cannot think thus hardly of thee!"

"Father! father!"— shrieked Marjorie — "thee will not peril thy life among the men of war — father, go not forth"—

The maiden's utterance was choked by sobs, and she fell weeping upon her mother's shoulder.

"Ha! verily! I will go forth — alone — there may be wounded who cry in vain for the cup of water — the maiden Waltham may be in danger. Harry Heft may be dying, and I standing here like a block of stone, looking calmly on. I must go forth to the field, wife — hold me not, daughter. I must forth — I'll be with ye presently"—

"Sure's my name's Chawls de Fust" — exclaimed the negro, rising from his deep cogitations, "I'll go to Massa Chew's house, too. Miss Waltham may be dar alone, and de debble to pay. De Britishers may shoot me — I hab but one life — Massa Smiley, I go wid you. Dat am a fac."

"Charles, thee is a good fellow. Come with me, if thy heart fails thee not. Nay, wife, I must go forth to the field!"

The Quaker and the negro servant issued from the farm house door, and took their way to the field of contest, and while the mother and daughter gazed from the window, they disappeared in the folds of the surrounding fog.

CHAPTER THIRTEENTH.

CHEW'S HOUSE.

"There is but one hope for us!" shouted Colonel Musgrave, as his regiment rushed in full retreat toward the British line. "One hope, Major Tracy! If that fails, our forces will be defeated — Philadelphia re-taken — and the rebel cause triumphant! We must make a fortress of Chew's House — yonder mansion of stone — its walls are in some places three feet thick, and we can hold the place for hours! Away to Chew's House!"

Major Tracy, by his words and example, encouraged the scattering regiment to press onward toward the mansion which stood retired from the road at the distance of near two hundred yards. It was, and is, a substantial edifice, built of massive stone, which will resist the tooth of time for ages. It stands facing the road, with two wings of stone supposting it in the rear, and toward the north — at the time of the Romance — the edifice presented a plain side of stone, only varied by two deep-silled windows, which gave light to that part of the mansion, one in the first and the other in the second story. The roof descends with a gentle slope, and the eves are defended by massive cornices, which give an appearance of solidity and strength to the building.

In front of Chew's mansion, on the battle morn, lay a wide lawn, reaching over two hundred yards to the main road of the village, extending south the same distance, and spreading toward the north, in an open field, of some four hundred in yards extent.

This lawn was defended along the road by a wall of stone, and a few trees were scattered here and there over its surface, while an enclosure of sheds and fences, for confining cattle, was pitched some fifty yards to the north of the mansion, in direct view of the northern windows.

In the north window of the second floor of the mansion, Marian Waltham sat gazing through the gloom and obscurity of the mist, upon the lawn that encircled the edifice.

Her fair bosom trembled with indefinable terror as she listened to the increasing tumult of battle, with her head inclined to one side, her blue eyes brightening with interest, and her lips parted with intense anxiety.

This terror the kind offices of the housekeeper of the mansion, whose portly form was seated at her side, in vain endeavored to dispel or assuage.

"La! Miss Waltham, what's the use of taking on so!" exclaimed the housekeeper, giving the keys at her side an important rattle. "As sure as my name's Betty Fisher, and as sure as Mr. Chew's family are at Philidelphy, leaving me to take care of this place, as sure as I've had to pervide for Col. Musgrave, and all his rampaging red-coats, jist so sure will you be as safe here, as though you were in your own father's parlor, over on the Ridge Road. "And so a rascally rebel run off with you — did he? The ragamuffin! Jist as you were a-goin' to be married, too? How unpolite —"

Miss Betty Fisher's round and rubicund face assumed an expression of intense curiosity

and her voluminous figure moved closer to Miss Waltham's side.

"How kind in Col. Musgrave to rescue you from the rebel's clutches! I b'lieve my heart that old Quaker was at the bottom of it all — I do! Jist to think — goodness grashus! What's that — coming from the fog — oh! Lud!"

Miss Waltham gazed with a hurried gesture from the window, at the exclamation of the housekeeper, and beheld, rushing from the depths of the fog — which concealed all objects beyond thirty paces — a confused band of British soldiers, some mounted, others on foot, who ran with shouts and imprecations towards the hall door which opened on the lawn.

The soldiers continued to pour along the lawn in the same irregular stream, regardless of discipline or order; some of their number were covered with blood; others had their uniform soiled and torn; others were destitute of arms, and the entire body presented all the appearances that accompany defeat and dismay.

"There's Col. Musgrave!" screamed Betty Fisher, "and there's Major Tracy all covered with dust and blood, among the rampaging troopers! Oh! Lud! here's a purty how d'ye do — and in Mr. Chew's house, too! Goodness grashus!"

Ere Marian had time to wonder at the appearance of Major Tracy and Col. Musgrave, in the plight in which she saw them, the room in which she was seated was filled with British soldiers, and Miss Betty Fisher hurried her fair charge away, to an obscure corner of the mansion.

While the preparations for an obstinate defence were progressing in every part of the mansion, the American troops, in pursuit of the flying enemy, arrived in full chase, along the Germantown Road, in front of the field in which the edifice was situated.

Herbert Tracy, with his men, placed together with the Partizan Legion of the brave Lee, near the person of the Commander-in-Chief, swept on in the very van of the pursuit. When the American forces were called to a sudden halt, in front of the mansion, so thick were the clouds of dust, and the smoke of battle that rolled over their heads, and so dense was the fog that enveloped their line of march, that when the young captain gazed around him, all objects beyond the vicinity of his own men, were wrapt in obscurity.

The stately form of Washington, surrounded by his staff, was visible, however, amid mist and gloom, as an aid-de-camp came galloping up, and gave information of the lodgement of Col. Musgrave with six companies of infantry in Chew's mansion.

"Shall we press onward," exclaimed Washington turning to the brave men around him, "in pursuit of the main body of the enemy who are flying before us, or shall we halt and dislodge the party of Col. Musgrave, who have thrown themselves into the mansion?"

"Halt! by all means," cried General Knox, "it is against every rule of warfare to leave a fortress, possessed by an enemy, in the rear."

"What!" exclaimed Col. Pickering, "shall we call this a fort, and lose the very moment of success?"

"Let us press onward!" cried Wayne, who at that moment rode up to the side of Washington, his sword dripping with blood. "Let us press onward! Onward and follow up the rout of the enemy, while our troops are flushed with success! Onward, and with another blow the day is ours!"

"Onward!" exclaimed Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton, "This is the very crisis of the action. While we attack the house, the enemy will rally, and we shall see the laurel of victory plucked from our brows in the very moment of triumph!"

"Onward, and over them!" cried Captain Tracy. "Now the day is our own — in ten minutes we may flee from the very field of victory with the British pressing on in our rear!"

The cry was echoed by all the junior members of the staff, but their opinion was overruled by that of the veteran Knox, who, supported by other senior officers, advised an immediate attack upon the house.

The roar of a steady fire of musquetry pouring from every window, from every nook and cranny of Chew's House, now came rolling through the fog, and scattered death and confusion through the American troops, who rushed into the very jaws of the enemy's artillery.

MEDAL PRESENTED BY CONGRESS TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

Chew's House became the centre of the fiercely contested fight.

Greene's column to the east were engaged hand to hand with the enemy in that quarter; Armstrong was thundering away into the ranks of the foe westward of the house, and every moment decreased the distance between the various wings of the opposing armies and the centre of the battle.

The American artillery was arrayed on the opposite side of the Germantown Road, at the distance of two hundred yards from the house, with the cannon so arrayed, that the balls struck the north-west corner of the mansion. The thunder of the cannon opened full on the house, but the aim of the gunners was rendered uncertain by the pressure of the fog. The American infantry were about to advance and attempt to carry the temporary fortress by storm, when it was determined to send a flag of truce and summon Col. Musgrave to surrender.

A young and gallant officer, of Lee's Partizan Legion, was selected from among the throng who offered to bear the flag.

Assuming the snow-white emblem of peace, held sacred by all nations, the brave soldier approached the house, and was within twenty paces of the hall door, when a blaze issued from a window, and the young officer measured his grave upon the sod, while the flag of truce was stained with the warm blood of his heart.

A yell of horror broke from the American army at this ghastly spectacle, and the attack upon the house was renewed with a keen desire on the part of each soldier to avenge the young officer, and as each column marched up to the mansion, the name of the murdered man accompanied each peal of musquetry and swelled high above the thunder of the cannon.

The plan of the attack on Chew's house forced nearly one-half of the central body to stand by and witness the slaughter of their comrades before their very eyes, without being able to raise a hand in their defence.

Taking advantage of this inactivity, General Grey wheeled the front of the left wing of the British army from his position east of Germantown, into the centre of the fight, and supported by the fourth brigade under General Agnew, opposed a successful and terrible resistance to the success of the American arms. The fire of the British musquetry, enveloping the field in one continual sheet of flame, was answered by the American fire flashing like forked lightning at quick intervals, and from the depths of the fog, arose the sound of host charging against host, the roar of the cannon, the cries, the shrieks, the groans of the wounded and dying, mingling with the voices of the different commanders, urging their men on to their various posts in the scene of conflict, but amid all the wild uproar of the battle, the deep murmured shouts of the Black Rangers broke upon the air, and their sable uniform gleamed through the white wreaths of smoke, as they thundered along the field in the thickest of the fight, accompanying the deadly fire with the war cry, "This for Dennis McDermott!" and each mortal stroke of the short, straight sword, with the shout — "This for the trumpeter boy!"

Like a dark thunder cloud, emitting fire and flame from every point, the Rangers swept through the foe in one firm phalanx, making a lane of dead wherever they passed, and leaving the wounded and the dying scattered in heaps in their rear.

The Americans fought every man of them, as though the issue of the fight depended upon his separate hand and blow; they fought gallantly; they fought undismayed by the heaps of dead which piled each step of ground on which they trod; but they fought against hope. The thick and gloomy mist still hung over the field like a shroud for their dead, and with its evil omen blasted every prospect of success.

The fog threw the Americans on the left into inextricable confusion, and they turned their arms against each other. Many a brave Continental soldier, leveled his musket, through the mist, at what he supposed a foe, and found himself the murderer of a friend.

The brave Col. Matthews, of Green's formidable column, passed to the east of Chew's house, and drove the British before him with the force of a tornado; on every side they fled before the terror of his arms; and his regiment was soon swelled by the addition of three hundred prisoners. Returning to the main body in the heat and glow of triumph, he fell in with a body of friends — as he

thought—and found himself a prisoner in the heart of the British army.

Herbert Tracy and his Rangers came galloping up to the side of Washington in the thickest of the fight, prepared for any effort that might retrieve the fatal mistake of the halt at Chew's house.

Never had Herbert seen the Commander-in-Chief moved by such deep and powerful emotion as stirred through every fibre of his commanding frame when, moment after moment, he received the reports of disaster and partial defeat, from his aids-de-camp, who were hastening, some from Armstrong's brigades, some from the commands of Generals Smallwood and Forman, others from the column of Greene, and all bearing testimony of the fatal effects of the want of co-operation and consolidation caused by the halt at Chew's house.

Washington glanced around upon the scene of confusion and death.

His face, usually so calm and mild in its aspect, was moved in every lineament by an expression stern as it was strange to those features so full of manly wisdom and dignity. His eye flashed, and his eye gathered a frown, such as had never before marked his countenance; his lips were compressed, and his tall figure, raised to its full height as with the energy of defiance and despair, an utter recklessness of self preservation appeared to possess him in that moment of agony, when he saw defeat hovering over the American arms.

"Follow me, who lists," he exclaimed, putting spurs to his steed—"We may even yet discover some vulnerable point around the fatal house."

He rode directly in to the fire of the enemy, toward the northern wall of Chew's mansion, and in his train, fired by a generous emulation to share the danger of the noble man, rode the gallant Hamilton, the brave Pickering, and the daring Lee, side by side with Herbert Tracy, who surrendered his men, for the time, to the command of Harry Heft, and rushed on with Washington and his staff into the very jaws of the British cannon.

Ere they were aware, the party found themselves riding within twenty paces of the northern wall of the mansion, with a deadly and incessant fire of musquetry pouring from the upper window, and the bullets from the opposing armies sweeping by their heads like hail, while the sod at their horses' feet was furrowed by cannon balls.

The danger was imminent, and nothing but interposition of a Higher Power could have saved the life of Washington in that dread moment.

The officers of his staff with one voice besought him to return, but unheeding their exclamations, Washington rode directly along the northern wall of the mansion, and noted that the shutters of the lower window were closed, and that it was barricaded half way up by heaps of loose timber and brushwood, while the muzzles of the British guns poured an incessant shower of balls through loop-holes cut into the shutters.

Having noted these facts,* the Commander-in-Chief turned his horse to the American lines, and, followed by his gallant band, rode forward, exposed to the fire of the contending armies, when, mistaking their way in the fog, they presently found themselves entangled amid the sheds and enclosures of the cattle-pen, fifty paces from the mansion, with bullets peeling splinters from the timbers every instant, and cannon balls scattering dust and sand into their faces as they struck the earth on every side.

"Save yourselves, gentlemen!" shouted Washington, and every member of the staff leaped his horse over the enclosure of boards, some three feet in height, and galloped northward toward the American lines, expecting Washington and Herbert Tracy to follow their example.

"Leap, Captain Tracy, leap your horse and save yourself!" shouted Washington, as a bullet lodged in the pommell of his saddle.

"Not till you are safe!" replied Tracy, facing the storm of battle with as much calmness and self-possession as though he were but breasting the career of a summer shower.

"I cannot endanger the limbs of this noble horse by leaping yon fence," exclaimed Washington. "He has borne me safe in too many a hard fought fight to think of it. Captain Tracy save yourself as best you may—I will

* The following incident is given on the authority of Col. Pickering, who was in the staff of Washington on the day of the battle.

take the path in front of the house were the fog is raised by the enemy's fire!"

And ere Tracy could reply, Washington put spurs to his steed, which sprang through the gateway of the cattle-pen toward Chew's mansion, and leaping over the intervening ground, with the speed of an arrow, bore the Commander-in-Chief toward the house.

Herbert leaned to one side of his steed, and held his breath.

Another moment, and Washington would be in the midst of the fire, pouring from the windows in front of the mansion. Another moment and his form would fall to the earth riddled by an hundred bullets!

"He shall not fall alone by the Heaven above us!" shouted the young Ranger, giving his steed the rein, and galloping across the lawn toward the house — "There! there! He is in front of the house — he is down! no! He passes! He passes as I live — safe — safe and unscathed! Huzza! Away Night-hawks!"

As Herbert followed in the footsteps of Washington — swept through the blaze of musquetry in front of the mansion — and taking a sudden circuit, disappeared in the fog toward the Germantown Road — as he gave his steed the rein, and rode over the bodies of the dying and the dead, which littered every foot of earth — the shrill and piercing sound of a woman's voice rising in an agony of fear broke upon the air. That sound came from a circular window in the northern wing of the mansion, and the face of Marian Waltham — her eyes dimmed with tears, and her lip quivering with terror — was thrust out into the light, while with clasped hands and heaving bosom, she sent up a prayer to Heaven for the safety of her lover.

"Oh! Heaven he is lost!" she exclaimed, as Herbert disappeared in front of the house, "he falls — he falls from his horse — they have killed him — murderers that they are! Nay, nay," she continued, as Herbert re-appeared on his way to the main road over the lawn — "He is saved! Heaven be thanked! He is saved!"

"Here's a purty how d'ye do in Mr. Chew's house," exclaimed a familiar voice, and Miss Betty Fisher entered the small and dimly lighted apartment with large drops of perspiration pouring down her round fat cheeks — her apron usually so neat and prim all torn into tatters — and her cap, soiled with soot and dust, suspended by a single thread to her hair. "Here's a purty how d'ye do, in Mr. Chew's house! I raley wish some folks 'ud stay at hum, and take care of their own duds. Oh, lud, such a fright as I've had!"

Miss Waltham used all her efforts to calm the agitated state of Miss Betty Fisher's mind, but in vain.

"Jist to think of it! I jist run down stairs to take a look a'ter the furnitur', and I'd got to the first landing, when what should I see — oh, goodness grashus! there was Sergeant Thompson, sich a nice portly man, a-laying at the foot o' the stairs, all his elegant ruffles kivered with blood, and all the furniture cracked to pieces, the mahogany tables split into bits, the carpets torn up — oh, lud, look there — look out 'o the window, Miss Waltham — there's the ribbles a-comin' to fire the house! Oh! now we'll be burnt up, and Mr. Chew's house will be turned into a bake oven."

Marian looked from the window, and beheld twelve forms in dark attire emerging from the cover of the fog and running toward the house at a quick pace. At a second glance she recognized in the foremost figure the person of Herbert Tracy, brandishing his rifle, and leading his men in the very blaze of the British musquetry.

The maiden took not another glance at the scene, but seized by a wild impulse of fear — with the idea of her lover's safety uppermost in her mind — she rushed from the apartment, and scarce knowing whither she went, passed down the stair ay, entered an open door, and in a moment stood by the side of Major Tracy, who, begrimed with dust and soot, was directing the fire of the soldiers from the windows of the northern parlor on the ground floor, toward which Herbert, unconscious of the vicinity of his father or his betrothed, was fearlessly approaching.

CHAPTER FOURTEENTH.

THE MEETING BETWEEN FATHER AND SON.

"A BAND of twelve determined men might approach the northern window and fire the house," exclaimed Washington, the moment he

was rejoined by the officers of his staff within the American lines. "It is a work of imminent danger, however, and every man of the band will, in all human probability, fall a corse beneath the walls, although the attempt to fire the brushwood and timber by the northern window may meet with success. I despair of inducing any twelve in the army to make the attempt — what say you, gentlemen?"

"I will be one of the twelve!" cried Herbert Tracy throwing himself from his steed.

"I'll be another!" shouted Harry Heft, imitating his example.

"And I another!" echoed Sergeant Brown, placing himself beside the captain and the lieutenant.

"And I another! and I another!" the cry went round, until every man of the Rangers had thrown himself from his horse and swelled the line of the self-sacrificing band.

"Here are nineteen men, Captain Tracy," exclaimed Washington, and a gleam of pleasure brightened in his eye as he gazed upon the tall and muscular forms of the Rangers.

"The others," replied Herbert, "have laid their bones on the battle-field."

"Yes, yes, captain, but twelve men are sufficent, and here are nineteen."

"General! Have the kindness to divide those who are to remain from the others."

"Where all are so brave," replied Washington, "the task is no easy one. My friends," he continued, "you who form the left of this brave line be pleased to step aside."

The seven Rangers stepped aside, their countenances stamped with evident chagrin.

"Now Captain Tracy, I leave the matter to your discretion. God be with you!"

With this exclamation Washington rode with his staff to another part of the field, and Captain Tracy made his arrangements for the performance of the desperate task, upon which the success or defeat of the American arms might turn.

In a few minutes every man of the twelve stood ready to start.

Six of the number carried torches and combustible materials in their hands, while the other six — the captain and lieutenant included — grasped their rifles, loaded in both barrels, with a double charge, and prepared in every respect for immediate action.

"Rangers," exclaimed Tracy, "when we advance from the cover of the fog, those who have rifles will rush forward, and fire in the very faces of the soldiers who guard the extreme north window in the front of the mansion. Those Rangers who bear the torches will then advance — fire the heap of brushwood and timber under the lower window in the northern wall — and while they are thus engaged, the rifles will pour a second discharge into the window, and then the entire body will retreat. Forward!"

Herbert Tracy led the way over the lawn, strewed with dead and wounded, toward the mansion.

Their path was enveloped in the clouds of battle, and the rain of bullets whistled by their ears or tore up the earth at every footstep.

It was a dread moment, and every man of the band sent up a prayer to that God before whom he presently expected to appear, and then every heart beat firmly and regularly, and every hand was nerved for the approaching scene of death.

"By the Continental Congress!' shouted Harry, when they had gained their way within fifty yards of the mansion. "Jist look there! If there aint the old Quaker, Joab Smiley, and the darkey, 'Charles De Fust,' right in the centre of the scrimmage! There's a vision, Rangers! Heaven help my eyes, but I never expected to see such a sight!"

The Rangers looked across the lawn, and beheld at the distance of twenty paces, the Quaker, kneeling beside a wounded man, who was placed against a tree, while the negro, stood holding a flask at his shoulder.

The battle was raging around him — men were measuring their graves within arm's reach of the spot where he knelt, troopers were sweeping past on their way to join the contest, yet still did that plain, unfearing Quaker tender his kind offices to the wounded man, bathe his brow with water, and moisten his parched tongue.

The unsophisticated negro who stood at his shoulder, half scared to death, by the terrors of the scene, appeared urging him onward to Chew's house, where his mistress was in danger, whom with all his fears he was determined to save.

"The noble Quaker is in danger," ex-

claimed Herbert as he glanced at the scene— "But we have no time now to interpose in his behalf! We must onward!"

Every breath was hushed, as the Rangers began to discern the outline of Chew's Mansion, looming through the gloom and fog.

"What mean those torches glimmering through the mist!" exclaimed Major Tracy, as standing amid a body of ten soldiers, placed in the extreme north window of the front of the house, he discovered the approach of the Rangers. "Ha! As I live, they are rebels, engaged in the execution of some desperate purpose. Now my men, now — yet wait a moment — now, now. Let your aim be sure; pick every man of them; now!"

The word of command rose to his tongue, when he felt a hand laid lightly on his arm.

He turned and beheld the form of Marian Waltham; her blue eyes glaring wildly, her lips apart, her cheek pale as death, and her golden hair, flowing in disordered masses over her neck and shoulders.

"Mr. Tracy — beware!" exclaimed the maiden, clutching his arm convulsively. "Pause, for the sake of Heaven, ere the blood of your son is upon your soul."

Ere the Major could gather the meaning of the maiden's words, the voice of the foremost Ranger arose without — "Now, Nighthawks, now!" and the blaze of six rifles flashed from the lawn into the open window. Four British soldiers fell heavily to the floor, and with a wild shriek, Marian laid her hand upon her heart, her senses swam in wild confusion, and she sank at the feet of Major Tracy, insensible and motionless.

"Follow me, every man of you!" shouted Major Tracy, leaping from the window out upon the lawn, while the smoke of the American rifles yet hung in heavy folds across the casement, and obscured his vision. "Follow me, every man of you!"

Scarce had the words died on the air, when alighting upon the slight embankment in front of the mansion, he glanced around and beheld through the smoke, a body of the Rangers in the act of firing the brushwood, beneath the northern window, while the other division were moving toward the window, raising their pieces as they advanced.

Major Tracy sprang from the embankment: another leap, and he stood within arm's length of the advancing rebels.

Raising his sword in the air, he glanced at the breast of the foremost Ranger, and prepared to plunge it in his heart, when a slight breath of air, wafted the smoke aside, and Major Tracy confronted his son.

"Oh, God — my father!"

"My son!"

He sprang back, with the quick, instantaneous movement of surprise; his right arm dropped to his side, and with his dark, flashing eyes, starting from their sockets — while his eyebrows were woven together, with the sudden, nervous expression, that trembled along every line of his face — he gazed upon the form of Herbert Tracy. He perused every lineament of his countenance, as if to assure himself that what he beheld was not an Apparition, evoked by a supernatural power, from the very gloom and carnage of the battle-field.

And there stood the son, the same expression of intense surprise gathering over his face — his dark eyes flashing with the same deep glance — the same frown upon his brow, and his right hand grasping his good rifle drooped by his side, with the same impulse that unnerved his father's arm.

Oh, what a wild contest was at work in the father's heart, as he thus stood gazing upon the child of all his hopes, now banned and cursed, by those lips that should have spoken but the words of blessing and the sounds of prayer; how fiercely were tumultuous feelings sweeping over his soul; how bitter was the struggle between nature and pride, between the long indulged feelings of natural affection, reviving in all their vigor and the new-risen bitterness of worldly ambition, opposing the remembrance of every kindly sympathy, with the stern thought — he has set my will at defiance, let the consequences be upon his own head; he has sown in the storm — let him reap the harvest of his folly in the whirlwind.

At last words came to the father's tongue, and again the sword was poised in air.

"Rebel!" he shouted between his clenched teeth — "Not thus did I think to meet you, upon the battle-field, with the sword of Treason in your hand —"

"*Father!*"—shrieked Herbert, as all the memories of his life came crowding around his heart.

"But, *now*, that we have met here, on this crimsoned sod, foot to foot and hand to hand, I tell you, traitor, that one of us must measure out a grave upon this field. You have a sword—draw and defend yourself!"

"Father!" cried Herbert, dropping his rifle and spreading forth his hands, "Here is my breast! I make no defence—I offer no resistance—strike, and fulfil your curse!"

"Friend Tracy, thee must not harm thy child!" exclaimed a voice, familiar to the ears of father and son, and the stalwart arm of the Quaker was thrust before the hand of Major Tracy. "I tell thee, friend Tracy, thee must not harm thee own flesh and blood," repeated the Quaker, as, wresting the sword from the father's hand, with a grasp that it was vain to resist, he very coolly shattered it into fragments upon his knee. "Major Tracy, thee is not in thee right mind, or surely thee would not demean theeself so unwisely. And, young man—does thee hear?—mount thee war-horse, and get thee away from the field! Does thee not see that the Americans are fleeing around thee? Away with thee—away with thee! Thee own men are cut down before thee, in the very act of firing yon window shutter—Ha! verily!"

Herbert, unheeding the scene of tumult and blood around him, sank on his knees, and clasped his father by the hands.

The stout Quaker, Joab Smiley, strode aside to the window, where Harry Heft and Sergeant Brown were struggling amid the dead bodies of their comrades, against five of the British infantry, who had clubbed their muskets, and were raising them over the heads of the sinking Rangers, in the act of dealing the death-blow.

"Hold, friend, thee must not strike thee brother!' shouted the strong-armed Quaker, throwing himself among the enraged British soldiers, and wresting a musket at every word—"Thee has no business to strike thee brother, friend—what does thee want with this mischievous weapon?" he continued, forcing a musket from the grasp of one of the soldiers—"Nor does thee want this—nor thee this—(Harry Heft, get thee away and fly—thee and thee friend.) Ha! verily! Friend, friend, does thee resist me? Wilt not surrender thee weapon? Then must I use force! What business has thee a-walking about friend Chew's ground, a-cracking people on the head in this style? Hey? Friend? (Harry Heft, get thee away—thee and thee friend.) Nay, friends, ye must not resist—I am stronger than ye—away, Harry, away!"

With these and similar exclamations, Joab scattered the muskets of the British soldiers, while Harry Heft and Sergeant Brown were enabled to secure two horses out of the number of riderless steeds that were galloping along the battle-field.

"I say, Joab—uncle Joab," cried Harry, as he leaned from his prancing horse, "if ever anybody speaks a word against a Quaker in my presence, may I be —— to —— if I don't lick the lie out of their hide, before they can say Jack Robinson! Hey! What's that, the Sargent gone, too!" continued Harry, as the brave veteran Brown fell from his horse, wounded by a spent ball. "This has been a bloody day for the Rangers! Uncle—uncle Joab, I say! Lay hold of yon horse for the Captain! Hallo, there, Captain—don't be kneelin' there to the old gentleman, when you should be makin' yourself missing! Captain, the day's against us; the Rangers are all killed, and we must be off."

Holding the horse, from which Sergeant Brown had just fallen, in his grasp, the Quaker approached the father and kneeling son.

"Father, your blessing, your blessing!" exclaimed Herbert, as he clasped the hands of his parent, who was gazing sternly upon him, as the Quaker drew nigh.

"Herbert, I do not curse—I do not curse you! But bless you, I cannot, my son, while your sword is raised in most unrighteous treason! I do not curse, for I cannot heap a deeper curse on you, than the stain of loyal blood, which crimsons your hands! I must never see you more—never, never!"

And with these words the stern hearted Loyalist turned away.

His son never looked upon his living form again.

"The day is indeed against us!" cried Herbert, turning to Harry Heft—"the Americans fly on every side, and yonder is Washington trying to stem the current. Let us

away — yet hold" — he exclaimed, wheeling his plunging horse around — "I have naught left for which to live — I will die upon this field — I will die with my father's curse upon my head ——"

"Nay, young man," exclaimed the Quaker, "that would be desperate, little better than suicide! Away with thee, away, while flight is in thee power!"

"Fly, Herbert, fly!" cried a voice which made the young captain's heart throb with a feeling of wild surprise — "Fly, Herbert, for my sake, if not for your own — fly!"

A fair hand was thurst from the small circular window in the northern wing of the mansion. and Herbert beheld the beaming face of his betrothed. One token of recognition was exchanged, and dashing his spurs into the flanks of his steed, side by side with Harry Heft, Herbert joined the retreat of the American soldiers, who swept in one wild torrent of defeat and disorder over the ground, where they had conquered at the break of day.

"Massa Smiley — Massa Smiley," cried "Chawls de Fust" issuing from the hall door of Chew's house. "My Missa Waltham am safe — she am, gorra-mighty — lor bless us! Dat am a fac! Sure's my name's Chawls de Fust."

"Verily, I must see the damsel" — exclaimed the Quaker — "She may be in trouble and distress, and I may comfort her. Nay, friends, look not so sourly at me" — he continued, as he observed the scowling brows of the British soldiers, who were rushing by him to join in the pursuit. "I did but take away your weapons for your good. Verily, I must see the damsel."

And with that word he disappeared in the hall door.

Chew's house was now entirely deserted by its late military occupants who all poured from its precincts, to join the torrent of pursuit which thundered in the rear of the American host. Along the Germantown Road, over the fields and enclosures between the village and Chesnut Hill, fled the scattered bands of the American army. In vain did Washington endeavor to breast the tide of retreat, in vain did Pulaski at the head of his troopers, throw himself before the disheartened fugitives, and urge them by all that they held dear and sacred, to face the pursuing foe! All was in vain! And Greene and Wayne beheld their men, who had borne themselves so gallantly, ere the bright prospects of the day had been blasted at Chew's house, turn their backs to the foe, and flee in utter despair from that field, where heaven and earth had combined to defeat the American arms.

How the American army retreated to the wilds of Perkiomen, how the wounded and the dying strewed the way, how the pursuit was maintained, and how most of the disastrous consequences of a retreat were avoided by the care and foresight of Washington, are all matters of historical relation, and we turn again to the blood-stained field of Germantown.

CHAPTER FIFTEENTH.

SUNSET UPON THE BATTLE FIELD.

The declining sun was again bathing the landscape in its golden beauty. The sloping hill, and grassy pasturage, the leafy forest, dyed with hues of autumn, and the level plain dotted with orchards and varied by cultivation, all looked more lovely in the setting sunlight — since the raising of the mist had imparted new life and freshness to the view — than when the uncertain beams of the battle-morn glimmered among wreaths of clouds, and threw a dim and pallid light along the darkened air, deepened to the gloom of twilight by the smoke and dust of battle.

"Will thee mount thee horse, Miss Waltham? Dost not see, young lady, that friend Tracy is mounted and ready to start? Nay, Betty Fisher do not detain the maiden with thee endless gossip, and Charles, man, what does thee stand grinning at there, like another chessy-cat."*

With many a warm expression of thanks and courtesy to Miss Betty Fisher for her care and attendance, Marian took the hand of the Quaker, and sprang from the hall steps of Chew's mansion, upon her favorite steed. which the watchful "Chawls de Fust" had brought from the mansion on the Ridge Road, to Germantown, since the strife and turmoil of the battle morning.

The fair form of Marian was robed in a

* Qu! Cheshire Cat.

green riding habit, which fitted closely and gracefully around her bust and shoulders, with a ruffle of delicate white encircling the snowy neck, while the skirt of the robe fell in voluminous folds over the maidenly proportions of her figure, and resting upon the saddle of her bounding steed, swept in a graceful train until it touched the very earth. Her glossy hair, with all its golden luxuriance, was confined by a small riding hood, topped by a delicate white plume, and looped in front with a brooch of the brightest lustre.

Marian's cheek was deathly pale, and her eyes were swollen with weeping, for the thought of her father's death lay heavy at her heart, and as she glanced at the tall form of Major Tracy, mounted on his steed at her side, all the scenes of the day that was well nigh over, and of the preceding night, rose before her vivid fancy like the fresh remembrance of the horrors of some terrible dream.

"Shall we move forward, friend Tracy? I lacks but an hour of sunset — Charles, mount thee horse; we must be moving."

"It reely makes me quite solemn-like to see you all a-going, and scarce a soul in the house but myself!" exclaimed Miss Betty Fisher, advancing to the side of Marian's horse. "Oh dear, *oh*, dear, here's been a purty day of it! And after the unmannerly soldiers have filled Mr. Chew's house with dead, and broke the furnitur and scattered all the chiney all over the house — Oh! goodness me! They then must clear out Colonel Musgrave, Lieutenant Wellwood and all, leavin' me to look to their miserable place! Oh, lud, Miss Waltham, I shall never get over this fright for a twelvemonth. Don't look so sad — that's a dear" —continued the loquacious house-keeper. "It's a comfort to you to think, that the ribble officer didn't run away with you quite ——"

"Verily, Miss Betty Fisher, thee will keep us here, listening to this prattle, until to-morrow morn. Let us push on, friend Tracy."

"Good bye, Miss Waltham!" screamed Betty as the party rode over the lawn—"Good bye, and remember me to all inquirin' friends."

"Gorra-mighty — lor bless me!" chuckled the negro — "Dat ar' woman got a tongue like de hopper of a flour mill! Clack — clack— and no stoppin' when it gets a gwain. Dat am a fac.'

As Marian rode along the lawn, toward the Germantown Road, on her way homeward, she could not help noting the awful quietness which had gathered over the battle field, in place of the noise and tumult of the morn.

The grounds, as well as the mansion, were deserted by the British soldiers. The dead were strewn over the surface of the lawn in ghastly heaps. The grass was trodden down, and wet with blood, while every indentation or hollow of the earth, was filled with a pool of the crimson current, and here and there were crevices dug in the ground, by the rolling of the cannon wheels, now affording temporary channels for the reception of the clotted masses of human gore which made the lawn a marsh of carnage.

Pieces of broken musquets, fragments of bayonets, remnants of shattered swords littered the ground, mingled with bullets and cannon balls, — all the ten thousand wrecks of war and battle-strife were strewn along, amid the piles of dead bodies.

The beams of the setting sun gilded the pale faces of the dead, with a momentary light that seemed like a bitter mockery of the ruddy glow of life, and the warm flush of health.

Marian beheld death in every shape and position.

Here an American soldier had fallen at the foot of a tree, and died with his back propped against the trunk, while his head fell to one side, and his mouth opened with a ghastly grin. One hand clutched the shattered musquet-stock, and the other lay stiffened on the wound near his breast. Close by him, a British soldier seemed to have been swept down in the very moment of the charge. His back was turned to the sky, one knee was bent as if he had met the death wound when running, and his face was buried in the ground, while his arms were outstretched, and his stiffened fingers were thrust into the upturned earth, as though he had grasped the sod, in the convulsive throes of mortal agony.

Farther on lay a heap of dead — American and Briton, Scot and German, interlocked in one ghastly pile of mangled bodies — some with their faces upturned to the sunlight, some with their hands upraised, as if to ward off the descending blow, others with every limb contorted by the spasm that attends a sudden

and a painful death, while some there were who lay extended upon the earth as calmly and quietly as though they had but laid themselves down to take a pleasant sleep.

Here lay a youth clad in the rustic dress of an American farmer's boy. He lay on his side, with his tangled brown hair thrown over his forehead, his sunburnt cheek crimsoned with spots of blood, and his plain and uncouth garments drilled with bullet holes, and torn by sword thrusts. His old-fashioned fowling piece, the companion of many a wild ramble amid the solitudes of the forest, lay near his side, and his arm was stretched out as though he grasped it in his death struggle, but the stiffened fingers could but touch the shattered stock without enclosing it in their dying embrace.

And thus along the whole field, in each nook, each grassy hollow, along the surface of each mossy level, were scattered those who had fallen in the morning's struggle, resting in all the ghastliness of death, upon the sod which had bounded beneath their tread at the hour of sunrise. Had aught been wanting to complete the picture, it was supplied by the presence of various mercenary wretches, who, hovering upon the outskirts of the field, stripped and plundered the dead, and scared away a flock of ravens, who had perched upon their victims, in anticipation of a plentiful banquet.

"God of mercy!" exclaimed the Quaker, as his eye drank in the horrors of the battle-field, "if ever the fancy might imagine that spirits of the dark world had built a loathsome mockery of every high and heavenly sympathy that dwells in the bosom of man, surely that mocking spectacle is here, for here man — outraging all feelings of brotherhood, all feelings of affection, all that is good or holy in his nature — has laid his fellow man down upon the earth in all the shapes of death, and every mangled limb and torn carcase, seems to bear witness that the Lord God dwelleth not in man, but rather that he is the temple of the Evil One!"

As he spoke, the party reached the main road, and Major Tracy spurred on his steed some hundred yards ahead of his companions, and riding in full gallop, he seemed to woo the current of freshening air, as it swept over his hot brow and burning cheek, without for an instant allaying the fever of his mind.

CHAPTER SIXTEENTH.

THE BALL FROM THE GRAVE-YARD.

Major Tracy, riding along in front of the party, soon reached a point where a quiet grave-yard looks out upon the village street.

It was then, as it is now, somewhat elevated above the level of the main street, and now — as on that battle eve — a wall of dark grey stone separates it from the highway, half shielding its green mounds of earth, and its long lines of time-eaten tombstones, from the gaze of the passer-by. He was riding thus leisurely along, with his head drooped low, as if in thought, his eyes downcast, and his hands on his chest, while the loosened rein was thrown carelessly upon his horse's neck; his entire manner betrayed the absence of all his musings from the real world around him; he was riding thus leisurely along, and had well nigh gained the grave-yard gate — which opened into the pathway from the centre of the wall — when a loud and startling report broke upon the still air; the body of the stern Loyalist swayed in the saddle for an instant, then pitched headlong to the ground.

At the same instant a line of light blue smoke was observed floating along the grave-yard wall.

Startled by the report, the attention of the Quaker was instantly drawn to the quarter from whence it proceeded. At the same instant that he heard the quick and jarring sound, he beheld the body of Major Tracy fall heavily to the earth, and the wreaths of pale blue smoke curling in the air above the grave-yard wall.

Unheeding the shriek that arose from the lips of Marian at the sight, or the yell of horror uttered by the negro, Joab Smiley gave the rein to his horse, and reached the spot where the Major fell, at the very moment when he measured his length upon the ground.

Joab sprang from his horse, and in an instant the head of Major Tracy rested upon his knee. It needed not a second glance to tell the Quaker that he held a lifeless corse in his arms. The body rested in his embrace with the dull leaden weight of death; the face was

pale as ashes, the dark eyes bursting from their sockets, glared upon the blue heavens with a cold glassy stare; and the nerves of the face, along the cheek, and around the mouth, were starting from the skin, with the electric agony of sudden death.

The silver star, which he wore upon his left breast, was crimsoned by the blood flowing from the wound near his heart.

Laying the body hurriedly upon the earth, the Quaker sprang over the wall of the grave-yard, and as he alighted upon the rising mound of a new made grave, he beheld the figure of a man, clad in rustic attire, disappearing among the shrubbery which overlooked the rear wall of the grave-yard, and, as he vanished, Joab noted that he held a rifle in his hand. He pursued the retiring figure, but in vain; he had fled beyond all hope of capture, and the Quaker returned sadly to the highway, where a group of villagers had gathered around the corse, and were looking carelessly on, while Marian held the head of the dead man in her arms. The faithful negro servant unfastened his cravat, loosened his dress, threw water in his face, and used every means that his untaught fidelity suggested to restore his master to life.

"Why seek ye not the murderer?" shouted the Quaker, throwing himself into the midst of the throng of villagers. "Do ye behold a man cut down in the very glow of life before your eyes, and yet stir not a hand to secure his slayer?"

"Well, I minds my own business," replied an uncouth looking villager, "I don't know but what I might tell who sent that bullet, but d'ye see, friend Broadbrim, this man (pointing to Major Tracy) is—is a—*tory!* D'ye mark me?"

"Are you men?" cried Marian, glancing around the crowd, while her eyes swam in tears. "Are you men, and have you one feeling of mercy, or pity, or justice, or right, and can ye stand and see a fellow being bleeding to death before your eyes, and extend not a hand to his assistance? Shame on ye!"

"He was a tory!" cried a second villager. "Go look at Chew's house, and ask for pity!"

"Look at the pits filled with true Americans!" exclaimed a third. "Go look at the pits dug in every field for a mile round, and then ask mercy for a tory!"

"Why, my friends," cried the Quaker, as his dark grey eye flashed with anger and honest indignation, "did ye mingle in the battle? Are ye so fond of the right cause, and yet struck not a blow in its behalf? Verily, my friends, it is my plain opinion that ye are a pack of pitiful dogs, whose bark is ever more terrible than their bite! As the maiden saith, so say I — shame on ye, shame!"

"You'd better not put any of your hard names on me," cried the ill looking villager advancing, "for all you are a Quaker, I might chance to strike you."

"Thee might friend, might thee?" cried the Quaker, as he approached the villager; "verily, friend, thee is of no use here; but, on the contrary, thee grows troublesome. A little musing among the tombs may do thee good?"

As the Quaker spoke, he extended his sinewy arms, and seizing the villager by the shoulder, very quietly bore him along to the grave-yard wall, and then, with as much ease as may be imagined, sent him plunging over among the tombs with an impetus that tended materially to make this ardent Hater-of-Tories pray earnestly "that he might alight in a soft place."

With a bland smile on his face, and without any signs of passion or emotion, the Quaker returned to the group, who first eyed his tall, robust form, and his Herculean proportions with a significant scrutiny, and then were content to vent their spleen in general curses, upon the whole race of Tories, Loyalists, and so forth.

The sound of approaching hoofs echoed along the village street, and the attention of the group was attracted toward two horsemen, who came galloping from the direction of Chew's House.

"They are Continentals!" cried a villager, "Continental officers, bearin' a flag of truce to the British army! I wonder what mought their names be?"

"I say, captain," cried one of the horsemen to the other, "in the name o' th' Continental Congress, what does this crowd mean in front o' yonder grave-yard?"

"Let us push forward and see," was the re

ply, and in a moment the foremost horseman pushed through the throng and beheld the dead man.

"Herbert Tracy!" exclaimed the Quaker with a start of surprise, but the words died on his tongue, for the son was gazing steadfastly and fixedly in the face of his father, and his chest heaved, and his frame shook with emotion, but no tear dimmed his eye. His grief was too deep for tears, his agitation too fearful for utterance.

And as the sun went down on that 4th day of October, in the year of Grace 1777, there they clustered around the body of the dead man, as it lay in the highway of Germantown, in front of the grave yard from which the assassin winged his bullet.

There was Marian Waltham, bending on one knee, and supporting the corse in her arms: the tears were flooding her cheeks and sobs of unfeigned sorrow were heaving her bosom. There was the Quaker with his plain honest visage and his manly form; there was Harry Heft, the bluff soldier, with his face expressive of mingled curiosity and astonishment; there was honest Charles, the negro, weeping for his master; around were grouped the careless idlers of the village, and over the corse, in the centre of the throng, was the form of Herbert Tracy; his arms were folded, his eyes were downcast, his dark hair fell wildly back from his uncovered brow, and over each lineament of his face came the expression of unutterable wo that gnawed at his heart-strings for years, and dwelt in his soul until his dying day.

One thought was gathering over his soul, absorbing every other feeling, and crushing every sentiment of natural grief——

"He is dead — the father that I loved! And his CURSE is on me!"

CHAPTER LAST.

THE RE-UNION.——THE EXILE.——THE MISERY.

Autumn passed — winter, with its storms, was over, and spring again bloomed amid the groves and glades of the Wissahikon.

The day was serene, the air balmy, and the earth glad with the verdure of the trees, the music of the free streams, and the perfume of wild flowers.

Two young maidens of different stations in life, as might be seen by their attire, were seated upon the porch of the mansion upon the heights of the Wissahikon. As they gazed abroad upon the face of nature, and drank in the wild delight of sky and forest and stream, while the fragrant air was playing amid the tendrils of the wild vine that clomb along the pillars of the porch, they forgot that the house by which they were seated was desolate, that its occupants were scattered abroad, and the silence of its halls but rarely disturbed by the sounds of human speech.

The light haired maiden glanced at her mourning robe, and she thought of those who slept in the church-yard; the sparkle of the ring on her finger met her eye, and then her mind was far away amid the scenes of battle, and her fancy wandered with him who battled in the ranks of war, and who fought against the gloom that was upon his soul.

The dark haired maiden glanced at the blue sky, at the forest sweeping in all its verdure along the height of the opposite hill; she listened to the lulling music of the rippling stream, and then her thoughts were with the hardy soldier, whose frank bearing, and rustic manliness, had won the admiration and affection of her young heart. She thought of many a ramble under that sky, amid those shades, and beside the lulling murmur of that quiet Wissahikon.

At a short distance from the porch, a tall and robust farmer was engaged in cleaning the walks of the flower-garden, from the mass of weeds and wild grass accumulated by time and neglect. His plain Quaker coat, was resting on the pailing of the garden fence, and with his muscular arms unbared, the farmer plied the spade with every mark of alacrity and vigor. Ever and anon he would pause in his employment, and turning his honest visage to the heavens, he would gaze at the deep azure above, then at the forest around, and finally his glance would rest upon the forms of the maidens seated upon the porch, whom he regarded with a look of quiet complacency, that told of a mind sobered by experience, taking delight in the calm innocence, the guileless converse, and the ardent hopes of youth.

A little further on, a shining faced negro, with his arms black as ebony, stripped to the

elbow, was engaged in trailing a wild vine along an arbor, while his shrill clear whistle broke merrily upon the air, interspersed with snatches of ditties of every kind and order of poetical merit, which he usually wound up with the loud "Haw-a-whah!" peculiar to the Ethiopean race.

"This spot is more pleasant to thee, Miss Marian," exclaimed the black haired maiden, turning to her fair companion. "This spot is more pleasant to thee, Miss Marian, than the loneliness of the mansion on the Ridge Road — is it not Miss Waltham?"

"A thousand feelings, dear Marjorie, combine to make this scene one of the saddest as well as the loveliest I ever looked upon. I cannot turn my eye to a flower, a blade of grass, a shrub or a tree, without the vivid revival of some memory of the past. Old faces, and well remembered forms, swim in the air around me — voices that once awoke the echoes of these walls, again sound in my ears — friends dearly and fondly beloved, are once more around me — and all the wo, the sorrow and care of the world are forgotten" ——

"Has thee heard of Captain Tracy lately, Miss Marian?"

"Yes, Marjorie. But his letters are sad and gloomy, and he seems to be warring a bitter contest with the dark remembrance of the past. He has not mingled with the scenes of battle since the affray of Chew's House, and the terrible event that so fearfully wound up a day of bloodshed and horror."

"'Twas a sad thing, the death of Major Tracy. How strange! That the assassin should never be discovered!"

"A fearful mystery is around the whole affair, Marjorie. Who it was that fired the shot, whether the hand of the murderer was raised in revenge of a private wrong, or from mere partizan enmity, has never come to light. These are times of strife and turmoil — and all the sympathies that bind men together in times of peace, seemed sundered and broken apart."

"But tell me, Miss Marian, did thy letters speak of — of — Lieutenant Heft? Is he still with Captain Tracy?'

"The Captain is still by the side of the Commander-in-Chief, though he mingles not in the strife of battle. His letters speak of Harry Heft in the kindest terms. His qualities of a free, open frankness, and a speech, perhaps somewhat too blunt and rugged, have proved beneficent to Herbert, and in the company of his honest friend, he finds a frequent relief from the sorrow that weighs upon his soul."

A gleam of pleasure brightened in Marjorie's black eye, and a warm glow flushed over her cheek. She was about to reply, when a loud shout broke from the negro "Chawls the Fust," and he was seen dancing about the lawn in every variety of grotesque attitudes and fantastic postures, which his lively imagination suggested.

"Why friend, thee is surely demented," exclaimed the astonished Quaker.

"Massa Smiley, Massa Smilie, d'ye hear dat ar' laugh? A regular haw-haw! Dat am Harry Heft's laugh — sure's my name's Charles de Fust! Massa's comin' home! Lor bless us — gorra-a-mighty! Dat am a fac."

Marian and Marjorie started up from their seats; the Quaker leaped over the garden fence, on to the lawn, and the whole party listened eagerly to the sounds of horses' hoofs, which came echoing through the woods from the road which wound among the rocks of the precipice.

In a few moments all doubt was at an end; two horsemen emerged from the woods and rode over the lawn, at the top of their horses' speed.

In an instant Marian was clasped in the arms of her lover, while Harry Heft, unheeding the presence of the staid Quaker, was so very rude as to inflict sundry kisses upon the pouting lips of the black eyed Quakeress, and enfold her pretty figure in a succession of loving embraces.

"Marian, Marian, my own beautiful Marian" — exclaimed Herbert, as he gazed upon the face of his betrothed, while her kindling eyes returned his ardent gaze. "Marian, we shall never part more. I have returned again to the scenes of our earliest love, to scenes hallowed by memory, though darkened by many a bitter sorrow; I will gaze once more upon the green woods and quiet shades of the Wissahikon and then leave these hills and vales for ever. Marian, will you share the fate of a wanderer and an exile?"

It needed not the whispered words that came from the maiden's lip, to tell Herbert that he was still beloved. The maiden's beaming eye and blushing cheek, spoke the thoughts that were fluttering around her heart.

"Marian," whispered Herbert, "our love has been cursed in scenes of joy, it has grown and flourished amid scenes of trial and wo, and now, alone as we are in the wide and callous world, we will be all in all in each other — we will forget in foreign lands that ever our path was shadowed by a single cloud."

"Why Marjorie, you minx" — interrupted Harry Heft — "how pretty you've grown! How your dark eyes twinkle — how your rosy lips open with sich a han'some pout, as though you were good lookin' and you knew it. No, no, Marjorie — there's no use o' poutin' your lips and shakin' your head. We'll be married — that's certain! See how uncle is shakin' his sides with quiet joy there! We'll be married for all I ain't a Quaker, and I'll away to the wars, and fight many a hard blow for my country yet, though the Rangers, and Dennis and all — God help me! — are dead and gone. And I'll come back a live man, I promise you, Marjorie, and we'll be married right off for certain. We will, by the Continental Congress!"

It was the last time Herbert and Marian should gaze upon the wilds of the Wissahikon. The blue sky was above, the forests were around, the old mansion with its closed doors and fastened shutters, was sleeping in the sunlight.

The arms of Herbert were entwined around Marian's waist; her face upturned to his countenance, seared by the lines of premature sorrow, glowed with the happiness of the hour, and her bosom heaved and her eyes swam in tears of joy.

A little apart stook the manly Harry Heft beside the blushing Marjorie; in the back ground was the negro, dancing for gladness at the joy of others; and in the centre of the group stood the Quaker, Joab Smiley, his honest visage brightening with unfeigned pleasure as he regarded the love and happiness beaming from the faces of all around him.

It was a scene of quiet joy, and one that dwelt in the remembrance of those who shared the felicity of the moment through the long lapse of future years.

Herbert, entrusted with a mission of the utmost importance to his country, departed with his blooming bride to the gay scenes of the French metropolis, where he remained until after the American war was terminated by the peace of Versailles.

Lieutenant Wellwood Tracy, promoted to a Colonelcy, left America for England, and then sailed for India, where his love of pleasure and dissipation soon supplied him with that narrowest and quietest of all habitations — a grave.

Harry Heft and the black eyed Quakeress passed the quiet years of their rustic felicity amid the shades of the Wissahikon, and long after the fresh-grown turf, extending greenly along the lawn of Chew's mansion, had concealed all marks of blood and carnage, the blunt soldier and his pretty wife still lived to tell the store of the 4th of October, 1777 — Harry to describe the scenes of the battle, the charge, the havoc and the retreat, and Marjorie to picture the fear and consternation that spread through the habitations of the village on that eventful day,

Herbert Arnheim Tracy, became known in foreign lands, as an able counsellor in the cabinet of kings, and tradition relates that after the lapse of years had borne his fair and beautiful wife from earth and its sorrows, a warrior whose brow was seared by the lines of premature age, was known among the bravest of the brave men who drew their swords under the banner of Napoleon, at the carnage feast of Waterloo. He was known by the title of General Arnheim Tracy, designated by courtesy "Count Wallingford," rather in respect to his ancient lineage, than from an actual possession of the estates of Wallingford, which, for want of a claimant, had reverted to the British Crown.

And the murderer of Major Tracy — was he ever discovered? The hand that pealed the shot from the graveyard wall of Germantown, was never recognized with all the accuracy and minute detail of circumstantial evidence. But tradition relates, that years after the battle — when the mansion of Major Tracy had

passed into other hands, and events of the Revolution had assumed the venerable appearance of antiquity — an aged man, whose frame was broken down with disease, and whose brow was furrowed with the traces of long indulged passions, appeared in the village of Germantown, and sought the shelter of the village poor-house.

In his dying hour, he muttered a dark confession of a life of crime and infamy, but the ears of his hearers were in especial attracted by a tale of horror which he told of the evening succeeding the battle-morn.

Returning from the plunder of the dead bodies that strewed the battle-field, he sought the shelter of the grave-yard wall, to examine his ill-gotten acquisitions. While thus employed, he observed approaching along the main road, an officer whom he had seen as he prowled from army to army during the day, prominent in the van of the British hosts, heading the charge, and fighting in the thickest of the melee. Seized by an uncontrolable impulse, the vagabond raised his piece to the level of the wall, and taking secure aim at the star on his breast, he shot the British officer to the heart and then fled. He knew not why he dealt the blow, but attributed the action to a sudden thirst of bloodshed which possessed him for the moment, together with a dimly defined desire to revenge the death of the Americans who strewed the battle-field. He made this confession and died, but still a thousand other legends exist with regard to the matter, and point out a thousand other causes of Major Tracy's death.

How Major Tracy died, and when and where, was ever a matter of deep remembrance to his son, but he died with the curse unrevoked and the imprecatiou unrecalled — that thought harrowed the mind of Herbert Tracy until his dying hour, and hung like a cloud of evil omen over the brightest points of the path way of life.

And so ends the legend of Herbert Tracy and his gallant band of Rangers, with all its thrilling incidents, which are too much interwoven with truth and fact, to admit of the "unity and oneness," that give interest and attraction to a story purely fictitious in incident and character.

The bones of Herbert Tracy whiten a foreign soil; his bride, his fair and youthful bride rests far from the friends, the valley of her childhood; a lowly mound in a village grave-yard contains the remains of the bluff Harry Heft and his dark-eyed dame, and after a lapse of sixty-five long years, the memory of the battle has become a record of solemn and painful history; yet still around the homes of Germantown, and among the firesides of the quiet Wissahikon, lingers and lives the

Legend of the Black Rangers.

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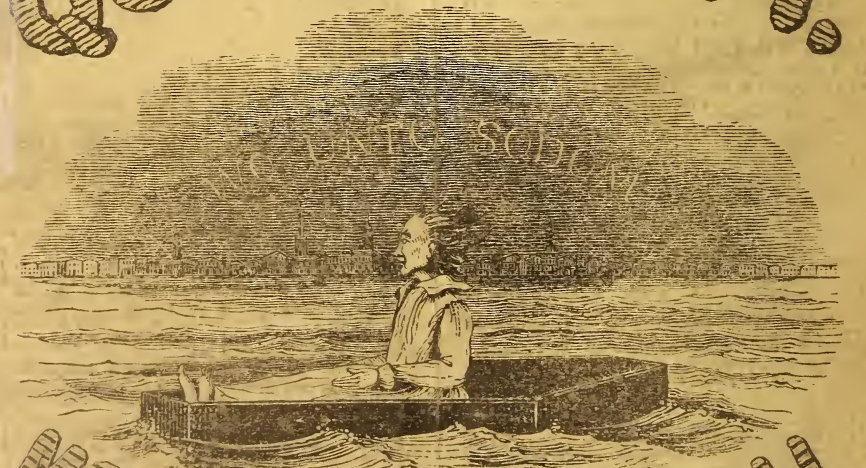

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